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THE GREAT LORD BURGHLEY

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13. Septebrj

Ego Gulielm. Cecill. nat. sum apud Burne in Com. Lincoln

THE GREAT LORD BURGHLEY

A STUDY IN ELIZABETHAN STATECRAFT

BY

MARTIN A. S. HUME

Author of "The Courtships of Queen Elizabeth," Editor of the Calendars of Spanish State Papers (Public Record Office)

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"He can never be a good statesman who respecteth not the public more than his own private advantage."—Lord Burghley

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TO THE MOST HONOURABLE

Robert Arthur Talbot Gascoyne-Cecil, K.G.

THIRD MARQUIS OF SALISBURY

PRIME MINISTER OF QUEEN VICTORIA,

THIS ATTEMPT AT A POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY OF
HIS ILLUSTRIOUS ANCESTOR, THE PRIME
MINISTER OF QUEEN ELIZABETH,

is respectfully dedicated by

MARTIN A. S. HUME.

INTRODUCTION

FOR nearly half a century William Cecil, Lord Burghley, exercised greater influence over the future fortunes of England than ever fell to the share of a statesman before or since. It was a period when Mediæval Europe was in the melting-pot, from which, in due season, some of her peoples were to arise bright and shining, with fresh faiths, higher ideals, and nobler aspirations, to start on a new career of civilisation; whilst others were still to cling a while longer to the garb of dross which remained of the old order, and was to hamper them in the times to come.

How England should emerge from the welter of the old tides and the new, depended to some extent upon providential circumstances, but more largely still upon the personal characteristics of those who guided her national policy and that of her competitors. Never was nation more favoured in this respect than was England at this crisis of the world's history. The conditions of the Queen's birth compelled her to embrace the cause of religious freedom, whilst her intellect, her sex, and her versatility enabled her during a long course of years successfully to play off one continental rival against another, until she was strong enough openly to grasp and hold the balance. But withal, her vanity, her fickleness, the folly and greed of her favourites, or the machinations of her enemies, would inevitably have dragged her to ruin again and again, but for the fact that she always had near her, in moments of weakness or danger, a fixed point to which

she could turn, a councillor whose gaze was never diverted from the ultimate goal, a man whom flattery did not move, whom bribery did not buy—wise, steady William Cecil, who, to her honour and his, remained her prime adviser from the moment of her accession to the day of his death.

It has happened that most of the historians who have dealt in detail with Elizabethan politics, and especially with Cecil's share in them, have dwelt mainly upon the religious and ecclesiastical aspect of the subject, and have usually approached it with a strong doctrinal bias on one side or the other. It is true that Cecil's life was coeval with the rise and triumph of the great religious schism in the Christian faith in England, that in his boyhood there was hardly a whisper of revolt against the papal supremacy, and that ere he died the Protestant Church of England was firmly established, and the country freed from the fears of Rome. Upon this text most of his biographers have founded their discourse, and have regarded the great minister as first and foremost a religious reformer. That he was at heart, at all events in his later years, sincerely attached to the Protestant faith, there is no reason to doubt; but before all things, he was a statesman who sought to raise and strengthen England by political means, and used religion, as he used other instrumentalities, to attain the object he had in view. He was far too prudent to say so, but he probably regarded religious dogma in as broad a spirit as Catharine de Medici, Henry IV., and Elizabeth herself. His youthful training and early circumstances had associated him with an advanced school of thinkers, who had naturally adopted the cause of religious reform, condemned by their opponents. The current of events and the blindness of the other side identified that party with the cause of national independence and prosperity; and for political aims, Cecil made the most of the support to

be obtained from those who demanded a simpler and less rigid form of Christian doctrine than that imposed by Rome. But in the party of reform Cecil was always the most conservative element. Other councillors might be, and were, driven hither and thither by bribery, by passion, by a desire to flatter the Queen's caprice, by religious zeal or mere ineptitude, but Cecil was judicious, well-nigh incorruptible, prudent, patriotic, and clear-headed; and though he was often obliged to dissemble and give way, he always returned to his point. Protestant zeal must not hurry the Government too far, or too fast, against the sworn enemies of Protestantism. England must be kept free from entanglements with Rome, but she must also avoid as long as possible national warfare with Rome's principal supporter; for Spain was England's buckler against French aggression, and the possessor of the rich harbours of the Netherlands where English commerce found its main outlet.

Throughout a long life of ceaseless activity, in which he had to deal with ever-varying circumstances and problems; hampered by bitter rivals at home and sleepless enemies abroad, Cecil's methods shifted so frequently, and apparently so contradictorily, as to have bewildered most of those who have essayed to unravel his devious diplomacy. But shift as he might, there was ever the one stable and changeless principle which underlay all his policy, and guided all his actions. He had been brought up in the traditional school of English policy which regarded the House of Burgundy as a friend, and France as the natural enemy whose designs in Scotland and Flanders must be frustrated, or England must be politically and commercially ruined. For centuries England's standing danger had been her liability to invasion by the French over the Scottish border, and for the first forty years of Cecil's life the main object of

English statecraft was to break permanently the secular connection between Scotland and France, and to weaken the latter country by favouring her great rival in Flanders.

When Spain, under rigid Philip, assumed the championship of extreme Catholicism, and pledged herself to root out the reformed doctrines throughout Europe, whilst France, on the other hand, was often ruled by Huguenot counsels, it will be seen that Cecil's task in endeavouring to carry out the traditional policy, was a most difficult one, and he alone of Elizabeth's ministers was able to preserve his equilibrium in the face of it. Some of them went too far; drifted into Spanish pay, or became open Catholics and rebels; others, moved by opposite religious zeal, lost sight of the political principle, and were for fighting Spain at all times and at any cost. But Cecil, though sorely perplexed at times, never lost his judgment. The first article in his political creed was distrust of the French, and it remained so to the day of his death, though France was ruled by the ex-champion of the Huguenots, and Spain and England were still at daggers drawn. In the first year of Elizabeth's reign Cecil wrote:[1] "France, being an ancient enemy of England, seeketh always to make Scotland an instrument to exercise thereby their malice upon England, and to make a footstool thereof to look over England as they may;" and forty years afterwards, when the great minister was on the brink of the grave, De Beaumont, the French ambassador, spoke of him as still leading "all the old councillors of the Queen who have true English hearts; that is to say, who are enemies of the welfare and repose of France."[2]

To allow the French to become dominant in Scotland would have made England weak, to have stood by idly

[1] "Sadler State Papers," vol. i. p. 375.

[2] *Memoires sur les affaires d'Angleterre MS.* Bibliotheque Nationale. Colbert, 35.

whilst they overcame the Netherlands would have made her poor, and to these national reasons for distrust of French aims, was added, in Cecil's case, the personal suspicion and dislike bred of early associations and tradition. The Queen, on the other hand, could not be expected to look upon the French in the same light as her minister. She was as determined as he was that the French should gain no footing in Flanders or Scotland; but through the critical times of her girlhood France had always stood her friend, as Spain had naturally been her enemy. Her mother's sympathies had, of course, been entirely French, and her own legitimacy and right to rule were as eagerly recognised by France as they were sullenly questioned by Spain. But when passion or persuasion led her into a dangerous course, as they frequently did, she knew that Cecil, sagacious, and steady as a rock, would advise her honestly; and sooner or later she would be brought back to his policy of upholding Protestantism, whilst endeavouring to evade an open war with the deadly enemy of Protestantism, which could only result in strengthening France.

The present work will accordingly aim mainly at presenting a panorama of Cecil's career as a statesman, whose active life was not only coincident with the triumph of the Reformation, but also with the making of Modern England, and with the establishment of her naval supremacy. In the space available it will be impossible to relate in detail the whole of the complicated political transactions of the long and important reign of Elizabeth, and no attempt will be made to do so. But Cecil, to his lasting glory, did more than any other man to guide the nation into the groove of future greatness; and the primary object of this book is to trace his personal and political influence over the events of his time: to show the effects produced by his clear head and steady hand

on the councils of the able and fortunate sovereign, who transformed England from a feeble and distracted, to a powerful and united, nation.

The task of writing the life of Lord Burghley has been attempted more than once, but in every case with but indifferent success. The failure has certainly not been caused by lack of material, for no English statesman was ever so indefatigable a correspondent and draftsman as Cecil, and the stupendous masses of manuscript left behind by him frightened even the indefatigable Camden from the work of writing an account of Cecil's ministry three centuries ago. "But," he writes, "at my very first entrance upon the task, an intricate difficulty did in a manner wholly discourage me, for I lighted upon great files and heaps of papers and writings of all sorts, . . . in searching and turning over whereof, whilst I laboured till I sweat again, covered all over with dust, to gather fit matter together, . . . that noble lord died, and my industry began to flag and wax cold." Strype also, who has reproduced so many important documents relating to Cecil in his "Annals of the Reformation," and "Ecclesiastical Memorials," was preparing materials for a life of the statesman, when death stopped his labour. Besides several less pretentious works by various authors, and the curious contemporary memoirs published in Pec[illegible] *Desiderata Curiosa*, a spirited attempt was made seve[illegible] years ago by Dr. Nares, Regius Professor of History [illegible] Oxford, to produce a book worthy of the subject. After many years of laborious plodding through countless thousands of documents, the worthy professor produced one of the most ponderous and unreadable books in the English language, of which Lord Macaulay made merciless sport in his famous essay on Burghley. "Compared," he says, "with the labour of reading through these volumes, all other labour, of thieves on the treadmill, of

children in factories, of negroes on sugar-plantations, as an agreeable recreation. . . . Guicciardini, although certainly not the most amusing of writers, is a Herodotus or a Froissart when compared with Dr. Nares."

The embarrassment of riches in the way of material is, indeed, the rock upon which most of the serious biographers of Cecil have foundered. In the Lansdowne MSS., at the British Museum alone, there are 122 folio volumes of Burghley manuscripts, which descended through the minister's secretary, Sir Michael Hicks, besides large numbers in the Cotton and Harley collections. The Burghley Papers at the Record Office are almost innumerable, the foreign documents subsequent to 1577 being still uncalendared, whilst the priceless collection in the possession of Lord Salisbury at Hatfield consists of over 30,000 documents, bound in 210 large volumes. From comparatively early times many of the more interesting of these papers have been in print. The *Scrinia Ceciliana* in the third edition of Cabala, "The Compleat Ambassador," the "Sadler State Papers," Haynes' and Murdin's selections from the Hatfield archives, Forbes' "Public Transactions," Birch's "Memoirs of Elizabeth," Burgon's "Sir Thomas Gresham," Nicholas' "Sir Christopher Hatton," Burnet, Collier, Lodge, Strype, Foxe, Ellis, the Harleian Miscellany, and Tytler contain a great number of original documents from Cecil's collections. Above all—since the excellent sketch of Cecil in the "Dictionary of National Biography" was written—the Historical MSS. Commission have completed [illegible] volumes of Calendars of the Hatfield Papers, and the Calendars of Spanish State Papers have been published by the Record Office. Of these, and the Domestic and Foreign State Papers, it is now, for the first time, possible to obtain a comprehensive view [illegible]

thousands of documents which have hitherto been difficult or impossible to reach; and obstacles which have barred the success of previous labours in the same field, may, it is hoped, now be more easily surmountable. The sources above mentioned have all been placed under contribution for the production of the present summary account of Cecil's political life, as well as some uncalendared manuscripts kindly placed at my disposal by the Marquis of Salisbury.

I cannot hope to have succeeded entirely where others have failed, but I have not spared time or labour in the attempt; and I have endeavoured, at least, to prevent my view of the events themselves from being obstructed by the documents which relate to them; and, so far as is possible in a short readable book, to present a general view of the policy of the reign of Elizabeth, especially with relation to the influence exerted upon it by her principal minister.

I have written with no preconceived theory to prove, no religious or political aim to serve, or doctrine to establish. My only desire has been to follow facts whithersoever they may lead me, and to pourtray a lofty personality who has left an enduring impress on the history of his country. I have not sought to present Cecil as a demigod—or even as a genius of the first class—as most of his biographers have done. The ways and methods of Elizabethan statesmen need not be condoned or apologised for because they do not square with ics of to-day. At a time when the bulk of the ople cheerfully changed their faith four times n to please their rulers, it would be absurd pecial obloquy a minister for having per- e a religion which at another time he triumph of England in that struggle tesmen who, like their mistress,

wed as much to what we should now call their failings
they did to their virtues. Their vacillation and ter-
versation in the face of rigid and stolid opponents were
ain elements of their success. Cecil was by far the
ost honest and patriotic of them; but he, too, was
man of his age, and must be judged from its stand-
oint—not from that of to-day. If I have succeeded in
esenting more clearly than some of my predecessors
view of the process by which England was made great,
he man who, above all others, was instrumental under
od in making it so, may well be judged by the splendid
ults of his lifelong labour; and his reputation for reli-
cy, moral generosity, and political scrupu-
opposite scale, will hardly stir the

MARTIN A. S. HUME

ber 1898.

THE GREAT LORD BURGHLEY

CHAPTER I

1520–1549

It may be stated as an historical truism that great organic changes in the relationship of human beings towards each other are usually preceded by periods of quiescence and apparent stability, during which unsuspected forces of preparation are at work. When the moment of crisis comes, the unthinking marvel that men are ready, as if by magic, to accept, and, if need be, to fight and die for, the new order of ideas. Although the outward manifestation of it may be unexpected, yet, in reality, no vast, far-reaching revolution in human institutions is sudden: only that the short-sightedness of all but the very wisest fails to see the signs until the forces are openly arrayed and the battle set.

The period of the struggle for religious reform in Europe was preceded by such a process of unconscious preparation as this. Over a century elapsed from the martyrdom of John Huss before the bold professor of Wittenberg dared to denounce the Pope's indulgences. It is true that during that century, and before, satirists and moralists had often pointed the finger of contumely at the corruption of the clergy and the lax discipline of

the Church, but no word had been raised against her doctrines. In the meanwhile, the subterranean process which was sapping the foundations of the meek submission of old, was progressing apace with the spread of printed books and the revival of the study of Greek and Hebrew. By the time that Luther first made his daring stand, the learning of cultivated laymen, thanks to Erasmus and others, had far outstripped the cramped erudition of the friars; and when at last a churchman thundered from the Saxon pulpit his startling doctrine of papal fallibility, there were thousands of men throughout Europe who were able to do without monkish commentators, and could read the Scriptures in the original tongues, forming their own judgment of right and wrong by the unobscured light of the inspired Word itself.

Thus it happened that the cry for radical religious reform in 1517 found a world waiting for it, and in an incredibly few years the champions of the old and the new had taken sides ready for the struggle which was to decide the fate of civilisation for centuries to come. By an apparently providential concurrence of circumstances, the personal characters and national ambitions of rulers at the same period were such as to enlist the hardiest and most tenacious of the European peoples on the side of *freedom from spiritual and intellectual trammels*; and eventually to ally the ideal of political emancipation and personal liberty with that of religious reform, to the immense strengthening of both. The fight was to be a long and varied one, and it can hardly, indeed, be looked upon as ended even now. Many of the combatants have fainted by the way, and both sides have belied their principles again and again; but looking back over the field, we can see the ground that has been won, and are assured that in the long-run

wers of progress must prevail, as we hope and , to the greater glory of God and the greater ess of men.

e year 1520 saw the first open marshalling of the s for the great struggle, partly religious and partly al, which was to lead to the triumph of the Anglo- race. In England, as yet, there was no whisper olt against the authority of the papacy. The King ıst written his book against the new doctrines of r, which was to gain for him the title of Defender Faith; Catharine, the Spanish Queen-Consort, an ent child of the Church, as became the daughter of the Catholic, lived in yet unruffled happiness with sband; whilst the all-ruling Wolsey was plotting and ing for the reversion of the triple tiara of St. Peter Pope Leo should die. The first step to the political England was the election (June 1519) of young King es of Spain to the imperial crown of Germany, in ssion to his grandfather, Maximilian of Hapsburg. marriage of the new Emperor's father, Philip of burg, the heir of Burgundy, with Jane the Mad, eiress of Spain, had joined to her heritage Flanders, nd, and the Franche Comté, and had already upset alance of power. Francis I. had sought to redress by securing his own election to the empire, but been frustrated, and he saw a Spanish prince in on of territory on every side of France, shutting Naples had been filched by greedy Ferdinand, s now firmly Spanish, as Sicily had been for es; the Emperor asserted suzerainty over most y, and, above all, over Milan, which Francis him- aimed and occupied. It was clear that the expan- f France was at an end, and her national dec commence, unless the iron bands braced a by the Hispano-Germanic Empire could b

through. It was then that the importance of E
as the potential balancing power between the tw
rivals became evident. Henry VIII. was rich in
able, ambitious, and popular. He had devoted
great energy to improving the resources of his c
and to reconstructing his navy; besides which h
Calais, the key to the frontier battle-ground of Fl
and France, and was as fully conscious of his
importance as he was determined to carry it to th
market.

It had been for many years the main point of E
foreign policy to counteract the unification of Fra
maintaining a close connection with the House o
gundy, as possessors of Flanders and Holland, th
cipal markets for the English wool and clothi
policy had drawn England and Spain togethe
the inheritances of Spain and Burgundy were unit
it had also led to the marriage of Catharine of A
in England. But Henry's desire to hold the ba
and Wolsey's greed and ambition, had made them w
to listen to the blandishments of Francis, and to co
to the distrustful and pompous comedy of the Fie
the Cloth of Gold. Charles, the new Emperor, had sl
his appreciation of the threatened friendship bet
France and England, by his Quixotic rush over
land to see Henry earlier in the year (1520).
was a short one, only four days, but it was suffic
his purpose. He could promise more to Wols
Francis could, and Henry's vanity was flattere
young Emperor's chivalrous trust in him. When
sailed from Dover, he knew full well that, h
splendid and friendly might be the interviews
ld of the Cloth of Gold, Francis would not
ing of England on his side in the inevitable co
n if he did not fight against him.

s the condition of English politics at home
d when William Cecil first saw the light at
n Lincolnshire, on the 13th September 1520.
into the world at the opening of a new epoch
is country and for the general advancement of
n, and before he left it the modern dispensation
y planted, in England at least, owing in no
sure to his sagacity and statecraft.

after life, when he had become famous, Cecil
in his own hand a private journal (now in the
Museum), in which he endeavoured to set down
nological order the principal events of his life. It
seen, by the specimen line reproduced under the
that he was in some confusion as to the year of
and other events of his earlier years. The entry
to his birth, as first made, is against the year 1521,
ds, "13° Sep. Ego Gulielm. Cecill nat^{s} sū, apud
n Com̄ Lincolñi;" but afterwards the date was
out and entered above the line, so as to correspond
e year 1520, whilst the blank against the year 1521
in with the mention of the arrival of the Emperor
s V. in London on the 5th June of that year. This
a mistake, as the Emperor's second visit was in
522. The entry with regard to Cecil's becoming a
t at Gray's Inn in 1541 mentions that he was at
ne twenty-one years of age, so that it may be con-
l that the year of his birth was really 1520, although
as usually been given by his earlier biographers.
is at Hatfield a little book which appears not to have
noticed or calendared, but which is, nevertheless,
ting for purposes of comparison, as I conclude it
been the foundation or rough draft of the journal.
small perpetual calendar bound up with a custom-
tariff: "Imprinted at London at the Longe Shop
ing St. Mildred's Church in the Pultrie, London.

by John Alde, anno 1562." In this calendar relating to his birth runs thus: "13th Sep. 1 Gul. Cecill natus sū: 13 Sept. 1521, betwee P.M.;" whilst his entering Gray's Inn is stated "6th May, 33 Henry VIII. Gul. Cecill veni a Inn." No age is given in this case, so that it bably be concluded that on copying the entrie permanent journal he recollected the age at became a law student, and then saw that he w year earlier than he had originally thought, and corrected the statement he had written.

The question of his remote ancestry is of n importance to the purpose of the present book, a Cecil himself, who throughout his life was a student of heraldry and genealogy, devoted cons attention to it; and Camden was at the pains his descent to a Robert Sitsilt, a gentleman of W the time of William Rufus (1091). It may be s for our purpose to adhere to a written pedigree field House annotated and continued by Willian which proves, so far as such documents can, th statements made by his opponents to the end life that he was of "base origin," were entirely This pedigree traces the descent of the statesman's grandfather Richard Sitsilt, who died in 1508 pos considerable estates in Monmouthshire and Her shire, to the ancient Welsh family of Sitsilt; b interest and trustworthiness really commences Cecil's own continuation of the pedigree fro great-grandfather to himself. At the end of th grossed genealogy he has written, "Here endeth Roole in parchmt," and "The contynuance of ye ye heyres males untill this yere 1565." This co tion shows that his grandfather David, the third Richard Sitsilt, came across England and sett

Stamford,[1] whilst his elder brothers remained in possession of the ancestral acres at Alterennes, Herefordshire. In the perpetual calendar at Hatfield, this David's death is recorded by his grandson as follows: "David Cecil avus meus obiit Oct. 27 Hen. VIII."[2] (1535). He was an alderman of Stamford, and appears to have possessed a good estate in Lincolnshire, which he purchased in 1507; and was appointed in 1512 Water-bailiff of Wittlesea Mere, in Huntingdonshire, and Keeper of the Swans throughout all the fen country.

Soon after the accession of Henry VIII., David Cecil, the substantial Lincolnshire squire, became a courtier, and was made one of the King's serjeants-at-arms. Thenceforward royal grants and offices came to him plentifully, stewardships of crown lands, the escheatorship of Lincoln, the shrievalty of Northampton, and the like, which must have added greatly both to his wealth and his importance. No indication has ever been given of the reasons for his court favour, but it may be conjectured to have arisen from the friendship of his powerful neighbour Lord Willoughby d'Eresby of Grimsthorpe, who married Maria de Sarmiento, Queen Catharine's dearest friend and inseparable companion; as the connection between Lady Willoughby's daughter, the Duchess of Suffolk, and William Cecil, remained almost on a sisterly footing throughout the lady's life. In any

[1] Naunton, in *Fragmenta Regalia*, says that he was personally acquainted with the senior branch of Cecil's family in Herefordshire, which was of no mean antiquity: but he speaks of David Cecil, the statesman's grandfather, as "being exposed, and sent to the city, as poor gentlemen used to do their sons, became to be a rich man on London Bridge, and purchased (an estate) in Lincolnshire, where this man (*i.e.* Sir William) was born." Cecil's enemies in his lifetime, especially Father Persons, spoke of David Cecil as having been an innkeeper at Stamford; but this is very improbable, though he may well have owned inns in the town, of which he was an alderman.

[2] The date of his death in the "journal" at Hatfield is given as 1536, and Collins states it to have happened in 1541, his will being proved in that year.

case, David's influence at court was sufficient to obtain for his son Richard, the statesman's father, a succession of lucrative offices. He was one of the King's pages, and is said to have attended the sovereign to the Field of the Cloth of Gold a few months before William Cecil was born, and he subsequently became Groom of the Wardrobe, and Yeoman of the Robes. He, like the rest of the King's favourites, fattened on the spoils of the monasteries, and stewardships of royal manors showered upon him. He was Constable of Warwick Castle, Bailiff of Wittlesea Mere, and Keeper of the Swans, like his father, and Sheriff of Rutland; and to add to his prosperity, he married the heiress of William Heckington of Bourne, who brought to him the fine property of Burghley adjoining his own estates at Stamford. When, therefore, William Cecil was born in the house of his maternal grandfather at Bourne, he was prospective heir to broad acres in a half-dozen counties, with almost the certainty of advancement through court influence in whatever career he might choose.

Little is known, or need be told, of Cecil's early youth. He went to school successively at Grantham and Stamford, and in May 1535, when he was fifteen years of age, entered St. John's College, Cambridge, to embark upon deeper studies. His anonymous biographer, who lived in his household in his later years, and can only have spoken by hearsay of his college days, says[1] that he was so "diligent and paineful as he hired a bell-ringer to call him up at foure of the clock every morninge; with which early rising and late watchinge, and continuall sitting, there fell abundance of humours into his leggs, then very hardly cured, which was thought one of the original causes of his gowt." It is, at all events, certain that he threw himself with avidity into the studies which were

[1] Peck, *Desiderata Curiosa.*

then especially claiming the attention of scholars, and in a very short time became remarkable for his wide knowledge of Greek especially, and for his extraordinary general aptitude and application. It is said, indeed, that he gratuitously read the Greek lecture at St. John's before he was nineteen years of age. By good fortune it happened that the University was at the time of his residence the centre of a new intellectual movement, the young leaders of which at once became Cecil's chosen friends. Already the new learning had taken fast hold of the brighter spirits, and although Luther's works were openly forbidden, they were secretly read by a little company of students who met for the purpose at a tavern in Cambridge called the White Horse; Erasmus had left memories of his teaching behind him at Queen's, and Melancthon's books were eagerly studied. A brilliant young King's scholar, named Thomas Smith, read the Greek lectures at Queen's College, and assembled under him a band of scholars, such as have rarely been united at one time. Cheke, Ascham, Matthew Parker, Nicholas Bacon, Bill, Watson, and Haddon, amongst many others, who afterwards achieved fame, were Cecil's intimate companions; and Cheke especially, who belonged to the same college, and was somewhat older, systematically helped him, doubtless for a consideration. Cheke's capacity was almost as remarkable as that of his fellow King's scholar, Smith. He was poor, but of ancient family, the son of a college-beadle whose widow, on his death had to maintain her children by keeping a wine-shop in the town; although he subsequently became the Regius Professor of Greek, and tutor to Edward VI., and, by the aid of Smith, reformed the vicious pronunciation of Latin and Greek upon which the Churchmen had insisted. Humble John Cheke was Cecil's bosom friend, and to his mother's wine-shop the

rich courtier's son must often have been a welcome visitor.

Details of his daily life are wanting, but he must have been a well-conducted youth, for the amount of study he got through was prodigious. Catharine de Medici, years afterwards (1563), spitefully told Smith—then Sir Thomas, and an ambassador—that Cecil had had a son at the age of fifteen or sixteen,[1] to which Smith, who must have known whether it was true or not, made no reply; but she probably spoke at random, and referred to Cecil's early marriage. He left the University after six years' residence, without taking his degree. Whether his father withdrew him because of his close intimacy with the family of the wine-shop keeper, is not known, but is probable. In his own hand he states that he was entered a student of Gray's Inn, in May 1541, and that on the 8th August of the same year he married Mary Cheke, of Cambridge, the sister of his friend.[2] The next entry in the diary records, under date of 5th May 1542, the birth of his eldest son, Thomas Cecil, his own age at the time being twenty-two (Natus est mihi Thomas Cecil filius; cum essem natus annos xxii.). In the Perpetual Calendar at Hatfield it is mentioned that the child was born at Cambridge, so that it may be assumed that Cecil's wife still lived with

[1] "Courtships of Queen Elizabeth."

[2] That Cecil's father was much displeased at his marriage is seen by a letter from Alford, his steward, at Burghley, after the death of Richard Cecil. Mrs. Cecil, the widow (to whom Burghley belonged), appears to have been an extremely self-willed old lady, and refused to exhibit her husband's will to her son's agents. In conversation with one of them, she said she knew that her husband had made a will (besides the one in her possession) touching his goods, when he went to Boulogne (*i.e.* 1544). Alford says: "Thinking this might have been about the time he conceived displeasure against you for your first marriage, I rode off immediately to the attorney who, according to Mrs. Cecil, held it, in order, if possible, to learn the contents of the will in your (Cecil's) interests" (Alford to Cecil, 9th April 1553; Hatfield Papers).

her own people. The next entry to that relating the birth of the future Lord Exeter, records the death of his young mother thus: "22 Feb. 1543, Maria uxor mortua est in Domine, hora 2ª nocte,"[1] and with this bare statement the story of Cecil's first marriage ends, though he never lost touch with or interest in the Cheke family, who appear to have been equally attached to him.

It may be questioned whether Cecil went deeply into the study of law at Gray's Inn. It was usual to enter young gentlemen at one of the inns of court to give them some definite standing or pursuit in London, rather than with a view of their becoming practising lawyers. It is almost certain from a statement of his household biographer,[2] that such was the case with Cecil. "He alwaies praised the study of the common law above all other learning: saying 'that if he shoulde begyene againe he would follow that studie.'" He probably passed much of his time about the court; and his domestic tells a story of him in this connection, which may well be true, but which rests upon his authority alone. He was, he says, in the presence-chamber, where he met two chaplains of O'Neil, who was then (1542) on a visit to the King; "and talking long with them in Lattin, he fell in disputation with the priests, wherein he showed so great learning and witt, as he proved the poore priests to have neither, who weare so putt down as they had not a word to saie, but flung away no less discontented than ashamed to be foiled in such a place by so younge a berdless yewth."[3] The chronicler goes on to say that the King

[1] Perpetual Calendar MS., Hatfield.

[2] *Desiderata Curiosa.* This is confirmed by a letter at Hatfield from Griffin, the Queen's attorney (27th April 1557), saying, "I am sorry that you never were of Gray's Inne nor can skill of no lawe," by which it is clear that Cecil was never called to the bar, and probably never seriously studied law.

[3] *Ibid.*

being told of this, Cecil was summoned to the royal presence, and delighted Henry with his answers; Richard Cecil, the father, being directed by the King to seek out some office or favour which might be bestowed upon his clever son. The Yeoman of the Robes, we may be sure, was nothing loath, and petitioned in William Cecil's name for the reversion of the office of *custos brevium* in the Court of Common Pleas, which was duly granted, and was the first of the future great statesman's many offices of profit received from the Crown.

At about the same time, or shortly afterwards (1544), Cecil's connection with the court was made closer by the appointment of his brother-in-law, John Cheke, to be tutor to the young Prince Edward, and of his friend, Roger Ascham, to a similar position to the Princess Elizabeth. A general supervision over the studies of Prince Edward was entrusted to his governor, Sir Anthony Cooke, who was one of the pioneers of the new learning, and a member of the Protestant party in Henry's court led by Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford, Prince Edward's uncle. The secular educational movement, which was now in full swing, had spread to the training of girls of the upper classes. The working of tapestry and the cares of a household were no longer regarded as the sole ends and aims of a lady's life, and it was a fashion at court for Greek and Latin, as well as modern languages, to be imparted to the daughters of gentlemen of the newer school. Amongst the first of the ladies to be thus highly educated were the four daughters of Sir Anthony Cooke, who were afterwards to be celebrated as the most learned women in England, at a time when education had become a feminine fad under the learned Elizabeth. To the eldest of these paragons of learning, Mildred Cooke, aged twenty, William Cecil was married on the 21st December 1545, and thus bound

himself by another link to the rising progressive party at court.[1]

Already the struggle of the Reformation on the Continent had begun. The Emperor, alarmed at the firm stand made by the Protestant princes of the empire, had hastily made peace with Francis I., and had left his ally the King of England in the lurch. The spectre of Lutheranism had drawn together the life-long rivals with the secret object of crushing religious dissent, which struck at the root of their temporal authority. The ambition of Maurice of Saxony, and disunion in the Protestant ranks, enabled Charles to destroy the Smalkaldic league, and in April 1547, after the battle of Muhlberg, to impose his will upon the empire. Henry VIII. had deeply resented the desertion of his ally Charles V., when in December 1544 he had been left to fight Francis alone, and during the closing years of his life the Protestant influence in his Councils grew stronger than ever. The old King died on the 28th January 1547. Parliament was sitting at the time, but the King's death was kept secret for nearly three days, and it was Monday, 31st January, before Lord Chancellor Wriothesley, his voice broken by sobs, informed the Houses of Parliament that King Edward VI. had ascended the throne, under the

[1] Roger Ascham, writing to Sturmius (August 1550), says: "But there are two English ladies whom I cannot omit to mention. . . . One is Jane Grey . . . the other Mildred Cooke, who understands and speaks Greek like English, so that it may be doubted whether she is most happy in the possession of this surpassing degree of knowledge, or in having for her preceptor and father Sir Anthony Cooke, whose singular erudition caused him to be joined with John Cheke in the office of tutor to the King; or finally, in having become the wife of William Cecil, lately appointed Secretary of State: a young man, indeed, but mature in wisdom, and so deeply skilled, both in letters and affairs, and endued with such moderation in the exercise of public offices, that to him would be awarded, by the consenting voice of Englishmen, the fourfold praise attributed to Pericles by his rival Thucydides: 'To know all that is fitting, to be able to apply what he knows, to be a lover of his country, and superior to money.'"

regency, during his minority, of the Council nominated in King Henry's will. The star of Seymour and the Protestants had risen, and soon those papistically inclined, like Wriothesley, and Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, shed tears indeed for the master they had lost, schismatic though he was.

With such friends in the dominant party as Cooke, Cheke, Cranmer, and Seymour, it is not surprising that William Cecil's career emerged from obscurity and uncertainty almost as soon as the new Government was established. For a young man of twenty-seven he had already not done badly. His father was still alive, but in the first year of Edward VI. the office of *custos brevium*, of which the old King had given him the reversion five years before, fell in, and this brought him, in salary and fees, £240 per annum (£6, 13s. 4d. salary and rest fees at the four law terms), and in addition to this, according to his household biographer, the Lord Protector appointed him his Master of Requests soon after assuming power. That he held some such office from the summer of 1547 is certain, as from that date forward great numbers of letters exist written to him in relation to suits and petitions addressed to the Protector. The office, as then constituted, appears to have been an innovation, as being attached to Somerset's personal household,[1] and intended to relieve him from the trouble of himself examining petitions and suits. In any case Cecil's assiduity and patience appear thus early to have been acknowledged, to judge by the tone of most of his correspondents, many of whom belonged to a much more exalted social position than himself. In June 1547 Sir Thomas Darcy informs him[2] that (evidently by order) he had inquired into the love affair between "Mistress Dorothy" and the young Earl of Oxford—who was a

[1] *Desiderata Curiosa*, and Camden. [2] State Papers, Dom., 1547-80.

ward—and desires to know whether the Protector wishes the match to be prevented or not; and in the following month Lady Browne wrote to him in terms of intimate friendship, begging him to use his influence with Somerset to appoint her brother to the coming expedition to Scotland.[1]

The master and fellows of his old college, St. John's, too, were anxious to propitiate the rising official and to bespeak his interest in favour of their foundation,[2] and the widowed Duchess of Suffolk (Lady Willoughby) consulted him in all her difficulties. The war with France was suspended, though the English forces holding Boulogne were closely beleaguered, and Somerset's greed was diverting the money which should have been spent in war preparations; but in pursuance of the traditional policy of England, it became a question almost of national existence when it was seen that the French intrigues for the marriage of the child Queen of Scots and the final suppression of the rising reform party in Scotland were likely to succeed. Arran had signed the treaty with Henry for the marriage of Edward and Mary; but he, and especially the Queen-mother, Mary of Lorraine, had resisted the deportation of the infant Queen to England. It is possible that some arrangement might have been arrived at had not the ill-advised murder of Cardinal Beaton and the subsequent anarchy given to the new King of France, Henry II., an excuse for armed interference in protection of the Catholic party. Then it became incumbent upon the Protector to fight the Scots at all hazards, or French influence over the Border threatened to become permanent; a double danger, now that the religious question tended to alienate England from her secular alliance with the

[1] *Ibid.*, and Tytler.

[2] December 1547, Lansdowne MSS., 2, 16.

House of Burgundy. When Somerset made his rapid march upon Scotland with an army of 18,000 men, supported by a powerful fleet, in September 1547, his trusted Cecil attended him in the capacity apparently of provost-marshal, in conjunction with the chronicler of the campaign, William Patten.[1] The decisive battle of Pinkie was fought on the 10th September 1547, and was in a great measure won by the dash, at a critical moment, of the Spanish and Italian auxiliaries whom Somerset had enlisted. According to the "household" historian so often quoted,[2] Cecil narrowly escaped death from a cannon shot at Pinkie, but no other mention of the fact is to be found. It has been doubted whether at this time he held still the office of Master of Requests, in which he is said to have been succeeded by his old college friend Sir Thomas Smith,[3] but there was no break in his close connection in some capacity with the Protector. About five months after Pinkie, in a letter to Lord Cobham, Somerset calls him "my servant William Cecill,"[4] and refers to letters written to him on his behalf; and in June 1548 the powerful Earl of Warwick, who was soon to supplant Somerset, writes to Cecil, almost humbly thanking him for forwarding some request of his to the Protector.[5]

Cecil's position, however, shortly after this becomes clearly defined, and his personality emerges into full daylight. Against the year 1548 in his journal, the only entry is as follows: "Mes. Sep. *co-optatus sū in of^m Secretarij.*" This has often given rise to confusion as to

[1] *Diarium Expeditionis Scoticæ.* [2] *Desiderata Curiosa.*

[3] This is the assertion made by Nares, but it is very questionably correct, as a letter dated 1st July 1548 from Sir Thomas Smith in Brussels (State Papers, Foreign) is addressed to Mr. Cecil, Master of Requests to the Lo[illegible] Protector's Grace, and a similar letter from Fisher at Stamford on the 2[illegible] July 1548 bears the same superscripture (State Papers, Dom.).

[4] Harl. MSS., 284. [5] State Papers, Dom.

the date of his first appointment as Secretary of State, but there is now no room for doubt that the office to which this entry refers is that of Secretary to Somerset; and the appointment, like that of Master of Requests, was part of the Protector's system of surrounding himself with a household as near as possible modelled on that of the King.

Thenceforward everything that did not strictly appertain to the official Secretaries of State went through the hands of Cecil, who in the meanwhile was imbibing the traditions of statecraft which were to guide him through life. Already the cabal against Somerset had been in progress before he went to Scotland, and had caused him to hurry back before he gained the full fruits of his victory at Pinkie. Mary of Lorraine and the Scottish nobles had almost unanimously rallied now to the French side, and had agreed to give the young Queen in marriage to the Dauphin, whilst strong reinforcements were sent to Scotland from France. Bound though he was to the extreme Protestant party, Somerset was therefore obliged to turn to the arch-enemy of Protestantism, the Emperor, for support and assistance. Charles had his hands full with his vast new projects of universal domination for his son, and was postponing the inevitable war with France as long as possible, and consequently turned a deaf ear to Somerset's approaches. Public discontent, artfully encouraged by the Protector's enemies, grew daily more dangerous. His brother, the Lord Admiral, had sought to depose him, and fell a victim to his own foolishness and ambition (20th March 1549). The attempt to interfere with the religious service in the house of the Princess Mary made Somerset even more unpopular, alienated the Emperor still further, and enraged those who yet clung to the remnants of the old faith. Then came the great rising in the West, the revolt of the

commons throughout Eastern and Central England against the enclosures carried out by the land-grabbing crew that surrounded Somerset. In April 1549 Cecil was trying to obtain a grant of the rectory and manor of Wimbledon, in which he eventually succeeded, and he appears to have purchased at the same time some fen lands near Spalding; but although he was in the midst of affairs, and must have been the Protector's right hand in most things, he was sagacious enough at so dangerous a time to keep to the routine work of his office, and avoided all responsibility on his own account.

When Warwick came back from his ruthless campaign against the peasants of Norfolk, flushed with an easy victory, the idol of a discontented and partly foreign soldiery, the time was ripe for him to strike his blow. Gardiner and Bonner were in the Tower, the Catholic party were being harried and persecuted throughout the country, the French and Scots in Scotland were now strong and invincible, the French fleet dominated the Channel, the town of Boulogne was known to be untenable; and, above all, an unpaid victorious soldiery looked to Warwick as their champion. Warwick himself laid the blame for all troubles and shortcomings upon the Protector, and summoning the officers of his army to Ely Place, constituted himself their spokesman for obtaining their pay. Through Wriothesley—now Southampton—Somerset's enemy, he persuaded the Catholics that he disapproved of the religious pressure that was being exercised. The first step taken openly for the overthrow of the Protector appears to be a letter written by Warwick to Cecil,[1] on the 14th September 1549, which shows, amongst other things, the high esteem in which the secretary was held. "To my very loving friend, Mr Cecille," it runs,—"These shall be to

[1] State Papers, Dom., and also in Tytler.

desire you to be an intercessor to my Lord's Grace this bearer, Thomas Drury, captain of nine-score men, serving the King's Majesty in Norfolk, shot receive for them his pay for the space of two months Warwick knew full well that no money would be forthcoming for these men's pay, and that the Protector was already being deserted by the councillors, who were finding excuses for meeting with Warwick at Ely Place rather than with Somerset at Hampton Court. At length the Protector could shut his eyes no longer to the desertion. The only councillors who were at Hampton Court with him were Cranmer, Sir William Paget, Sir William Petre, and Sir Thomas Smith, Secretaries of State, and his own secretary, William Cecil. The meetings at Ely Place and the growing storm against him found Somerset unprotected and unprepared. On the 1st October he issued a proclamation calling upon the lieges to muster and defend the King; but most of his advisers near him deprecated the use of force, which they knew would be fruitless against Warwick and the troops, and his divided councils only resulted in the dissemination of anonymous handbills and circulars stating that the King's person in danger from Warwick, and the summoning of nobles as were thought most likely to be favourable Protector's cause. Secretary Petre, who had ted an agreement, was on the 7th October sent don to confer with Warwick, but he betrayed his nd returned no more. The King and the Protector the meanwhile removed to Windsor for greater ; but Warwick had gained the Tower and had ed the city of London, and it was clear to all Somerset's power was gone. All fell away except only Sir Thomas Smith. The two generals in arms, Lords Russell and Herbert, Warwick. Cranmer and Paget, it is true,

tined by the side of the Protector, but, like Petre y played him false. No word or sign is given o ecil, though he too remained with his master; but i s significant that all the letters to Warwick at th time are in the handwriting of Sir Thomas Smith, an at this moment of difficulty and danger sagacious Ceci recedes into the position of a private secretary, sheltere behind the responsibility of his master.

In vain Somerset, at the prompting of Cranmer an Paget, sought to make terms with Warwick. Findin that Petre did not return to Windsor, but that the Lor in London demanded unconditional submission, t Protector, in the name of the King, sent Sir Philip Ho on the 8th October with an appeal *ad misericordiam* Warwick. "Marry," says the letter, "to put himse simply into your hands, having heard as he and w have, without knowing upon what conditions, is n reasonable. Life is sweet, my Lords, and they say y do seek his blood and his death . . . Wherefore, go my Lords, we beseech you again and again, if y have conceived any such determination, to put it c of your heads, and incline your hearts to kindness a humanity, remembering that he hath never been to any of you, and why should you be cruelly to him."[1]

This appeal was supported by a passionate from Smith to Petre for clemency to the Pr But Hoby also played false, and delayed his until Warwick had secured the formal adh Russell and Herbert. He then returned to with Warwick's secret ultimatum to Cranm and Paget, warning them to desert the Prote prepared to share his fate. Cranmer and way, and washed their hands of the betra

[1] State Papers, Dom.

stood firm, and faced the consequence; whilst Cecil discreetly retired into the background, and apparently did nothing, though he was certainly present when Hoby delivered his official message, solemnly promising that no harm was intended, or would be done, to Somerset or his friends; "upon this all the aforenamed there present wept for joy, and prayed for the Lords. Mr. Comptroller (Paget) fell down on his knees, and clasped the Duke about the knees, and weeping said, 'O! my Lord, ye see now what my Lords be.'" Paget's crocodile tears were hardly dry before he sent a servant post-haste to London, saying that the Protector was now off his guard, and might easily be seized. The next day Somerset was a prisoner, and three days afterwards was in the Tower. Smith, Cecil, Thynne, and Stanhope were placed under arrest in their own apartments, whilst Cranmer, Paget, and Petre reaped the reward of their apostasy.[1]

When the Protector was sent to the Tower, all of his friends were made his fellow-prisoners except Cecil. Smith was dismissed from his offices, and threatened with the extreme penalty for treason; but Cecil, the Protector's right hand, through whom all his patronage had passed, escaped punishment at the time[2] (13th October 1549). Warwick was apparently an old friend of his father,[3] and had unquestionably a great opinion of Cecil's own application and sagacity. This may have inclined him to leniency in his case, but for some reason not disclosed he was certainly a prisoner in the Tower in the following month. In a letter from his friend the Duchess of Suffolk, dated 16th November 1549 (Lans-

[1] The correspondence will be found in Ellis's original letters, and State Papers, Dom., and also in Strype's "Memorials."

[2] Burnet.

[3] State Papers, Dom.: Northumberland to Cecil, 31st May 1552.

downe MSS., 2, 24), she condoles with him for "the loss of his place in *the Duke of Somerset's family*,"[1] but says nothing to lead to the idea that he is in prison. But in the holograph journal already quoted, there is an entry—although, curiously enough, out of its proper position, and opposite the year 1547, saying, "*Mēse Novēb a° 3° E vi. fui in Turre*;" and his household biographer also records the fact as follows: "In the *second* year of K. Edward VI. he (Cecil) was committed to the Tower about the Duke of Somerset's first calling in question, remaining there a quarter of a year, and was then enlarged;" but, as has already been explained, this life was written in the minister's old age, and as he certainly was not in the Tower as a prisoner twice, the imprisonment referred to must have been that of November 1549 (3rd Edward VI.). There is, in any case, a gap in all known records with regard to Cecil for several months after Somerset's disgrace, and he evidently had no share in public affairs for nearly a year after Warwick's (now Northumberland's) rise, during which time Sir William Petre and Dr. Wotton—who succeeded Smith—were joint Secretaries of State.

[1] This disposes of the suggestion that Cecil was Secretary of State at this time.

CHAPTER II

1550–1553

THE Catholic party soon found that Northumberland had used them only as a cat's-paw to satisfy his ambition; and that where mild Somerset had scourged them with whips, he would scourge them with scorpions. Gardiner and Bonner were made closer prisoners than ever. Princess Mary, who had practically defied Somerset about her Mass, was more sternly dealt with by Northumberland, her chaplains imprisoned, and her household placed under strict observation;[1] Latin service was strictly forbidden throughout the realm, altars were abolished, and uniformity enforced; whilst Southampton, who had been largely instrumental in the overthrow of Somerset, found, to his dismay, that he had laboured in vain so far as he and his co-religionists were concerned. There is no reason to doubt that, even thus early, Northumberland's ambitious plans were already formed. For their success two things were absolutely necessary: first, the unanimous support of the Protestant party; and next, a close understanding with France, which meant a reversal of the traditional foreign policy of this country. The attempt to supersede Mary on the death of the King, who was seen to be of short life, would be certain to meet with opposition on the part of the Emperor, and would necessitate the support of France to be successful. Much as Northumberland had

[1] See Correspondence, Lady Mary and the Council. "Foxe's Acts and Monuments."

denounced the idea of the surrender of Boulogne in the time of Somerset, he lost no time in concluding a peace by which the town was given up, the necessity for doing so being still laid to the charge of his predecessor; and the alliance between France and England, which included Scotland, was nominally made the closer by the betrothal of Elizabeth,[1] the eldest daughter of the King of France to Edward VI. Soon Somerset, who still had many friends amongst Protestants, was released from prison, and in more humble guise readmitted to the Council. On every hand Northumberland courted popularity from all but the extreme Catholics, from whom he had nothing but opposition to expect.

Under the circumstances it was necessary to have by his side an experienced Secretary of State of Protestant leanings, as well as of assiduity and ability. Petre and Wotton were known to be more than doubtful with regard to religion; Smith had made himself impossible by the active part he took against Northumberland at the time of Somerset's imprisonment. No man was more fitted to the post than Cecil, and on the 5th September 1550 he was made for the first time Secretary of State. In the "perpetual calendar" at Hatfield the entry runs, "5 Sep. 4 Ed. VI., apud Oatlands Guil. Cecill admisus secr̄ in loco D. Wotton," and the Privy Council book confirms this, though the King in his journal gives the date of the appointment as the 6th September. Again William Cecil emerges from obscurity, and henceforward his position is unequivocal. As before, everything seemed to pass through his hands. No matter was too small or too large to claim his attention. His household biographer says of him that he worked incessantly, except at meal times, when he unbent and chatted wittily to his friends, but never of business. He could, he says, never

[1] She afterwards became the third wife of Philip II. of Spain, 1560.

play any sort of game, took no interest in sport or pastimes, his only exercise being riding round his garden walks on a little mule. "He was rather meanly statured, but well proportioned, very straight and upright, active and hardy, until crippled by constant gout." His hair and beard were brown, before they became silver-white, as they did early in life; and his carriage and conversation were always grave and circumspect.

If his own conduct was ruled—as some of his actions certainly were—by the maxims which in middle age he laid down for his favourite son, he must have been a marvel of prudence and wisdom. Like the usual recommendations of age to youth, many of these precepts simply inculcate moderation, religion, virtue, and other obviously good qualities; but here and there Cecil's own philosophy of life peeps out, and some of the reasons of his success are exhibited. "Let thy hospitality be moderate, . . . rather plentiful than sparing, for I never knew any man grow poor by keeping an orderly table. . . . Beware thou spendest not more than three of four parts of thy revenue, and not above a third part of that in thy house." "That gentleman who sells an acre of land sells an ounce of credit, for gentility is nothing else but ancient riches." "Suffer not thy sons to cross the Alps, for they shall learn nothing there but pride, blasphemy, and atheism; and if by travel they get a few broken languages, they shall profit them nothing more than to have one meat served up in divers dishes. Neither train them up in wars, for he that sets up to live by that profession can hardly be an honest man or a good Christian." "Beware of being surety for thy best friends; he that payeth another man's debts seeketh his own decay." "Be sure to keep some great man thy friend, but trouble him not with trifles; compliment him often with many, yet small, gifts." "Towards thy superiors/

be humble, yet generous; with thine equals familiar, yet respectful; towards thine inferiors show much humanity, and some familiarity, as to bow the body, stretch forth the hand, and to uncover the head." "Trust not any man with thy life, credit, or estate, for it is mere folly for a man to enthral himself to his friend." Such maxims as these evidently enshrine much of his own temper, and throughout his career he rarely seems to have violated them. His was a selfish and ungenerous gospel, but a prudent and circumspect one.

From the first days of his appointment as Secretary of State, the Duchess of Suffolk was again his constant correspondent. As she was one of the first to condole with him on his misfortune, she was early to congratulate him on "the good exchanges he had made, and on having come to a good market";[1] and thenceforward all the Lincolnshire gossip from Grimsthorpe and Tattershall reached the Secretary regularly, with many Lincolnshire petitions, and much business in the buying and leasing of land by Cecil in the county, although his father lived until the following year, 1552.[2] His erudite wife, of whom he always speaks with tender regard, seems to have kept up a correspondence in Greek with their friend, Sir Thomas Morysine, the English Ambassador to the Emperor, and with the learned Joannes Sturmius, to which several references are made in Morysine's eccentric and affected letters to Cecil in the State Papers, Foreign.

The letters of Morysine and Mason, the Ambassador to France, to Cecil are of more importance as giving a just idea of Northumberland's policy abroad than are their despatches to the Council. The Protestant princes were already recovering their spirits after the

[1] State Papers, Dom.: Duchess of Suffolk to Cecil, 2nd October 1550.

[2] Or 1553, according to the Perpetual Calendar at Hatfield.

defeat of Muhlberg, and the Emperor was again faced by persistent opposition in the Diet. Henry II., having now made sure of Northumberland's necessary adhesion to him, once more launched against the empire the forces of the Turks in the Mediterranean, whilst French armies invaded Italy and threatened Flanders. To the old-fashioned English diplomatists, this driving of the Emperor into a corner was a subject of alarm. Wotton, in a letter to Cecil (2nd January 1551), expresses the opinion that an attack upon the English at Calais would be the next move of the French King, and that Frenchmen generally are not to be trusted;[1] and Mason, the Ambassador in France (November 1550) writes also to Cecil: "The French profess much, but I doubt their sincerity; I fear they know too well our estate, and thereby think to ride upon our backs."[2] But, withal, though as yet they knew it not, Northumberland's plans depended upon a close understanding with France, and during the rest of his rule this was his guiding principle. Mason had to be withdrawn from France, and Pickering, another friend of Cecil's, more favourable to the French interest, was appointed; whilst Wotton was sent to calm the susceptibilities of the Emperor, who was growing fractious at the close alliance between Northumberland and the French, which was being cemented by one of the most splendid embassies that ever left England (March 1551). Prudent Cecil through it all gives in his correspondence no inkling of his own feeling towards Northumberland's new departure in foreign policy, though the letters of his many friends to him are a sure indication that they knew he was not really in favour of it.

In home affairs he was just as discreet. His view of the duty of a Secretary of State was to carry out the

[1] Hatfield Papers. [2] State Papers, Foreign.

orders of the Council without seeking to impose his own opinion unduly, and to the last days of his life his methods were conciliatory and diplomatic rather than forcible. He bent before insistence; but he usually had his way, if indirectly, in the end, as will be seen in the course of his career. For instance, one of the first measures which he had to carry out under Northumberland was the debasement of the coinage,[1] though it was one of his favourite maxims that "the realm cannot be rich whose coin is base,"[2] and his persistent efforts to reform the coinage under Elizabeth contributed much to the renewed prosperity of England. It would appear to have been his system to make his opinion known frankly in the Council, but when it was overborne by a majority, to carry out the opposite policy loyally. As will be seen, this mode of proceeding probably saved his head on the fall of Northumberland.

He was, indeed, not of the stuff from which martyrs are made, and when his first patron and friend, Somerset, finally fell, to the sorrow of all England, and lost his head on Tower Hill, Cecil's own position remained unassailed. This is not the place to enter fully upon the vexed question of the guilt of Somerset in the alleged plan to murder Warwick and his friends, but a glance at Cecil's attitude at the time will be useful. According to the young King's journal, the first revelation of the conspiracy was made on the 7th October 1551 by Sir Thomas Palmer, who on the following days amplified his information and implicated many of Somerset's friends. On the 14th, Somerset had got wind of the affair, and sent for his friend Secretary Cecil to tell him he was afraid there was some mischief brewing. Cecil answered coldly, "that if he were not guilty he might be of good courage; if he were, he had nothing to say

[1] Hatfield Papers, part i., p. 88. [2] *Desiderata Curiosa.*

but to lament him."[1] In two days Somerset and his friends were in the Tower, and thenceforward through all the shameful trial, until the sacrifice was finally consummated, Cecil appeared to be prudently wrapped up in foreign affairs;[2] for to him had been referred the appeal of the Protestant princes brought by his friend A'Lasco, for help against their suzerain the Emperor, and to others fell the main task of removing the King's uncle from the path of Northumberland.

Cecil's position as a Protestant Secretary of State was one that required all his tact and discretion. Somerset was his first friend and "master"; and although it is not well established that the Duke personally was guilty of the particular crime for which he suffered, it is unquestionable that he had been for several months coquetting with the Catholic party, had agitated for the release of Gardiner from the Tower, and that his friends were busy, almost certainly with his own connivance, to obtain for him in the coming Parliament the renewal of his office of Protector. Light is thrown upon Cecil's share in bringing about the Duke's downfall, by the letters to him of his friend Whalley,[3] who had been officiously pushing Somerset's interests early in 1551, and had been imprisoned for it. In June he had been released, and was apparently made use of by Cecil to convey letters from the latter in

[1] King Edward's Journal, printed in Burnet.

[2] There is, however, a memorandum in the Cotton MSS., Titus B II, (printed in Ellis's original letters) which proves that, though Cecil may not have been publicly prominent in the condemnation of Somerset, his acumen and diligence were, as usual, made use of to that end. The document is entirely written by Cecil, and is a list of fifteen questions to be put to Somerset in the Tower, all of them of a leading character and calculated to compromise the prisoner. In Cotton, Vesp. 171, will be found the minutes of the Council which discussed the execution of Somerset. Cecil has written thereon, as if to exonerate himself from all responsibility, that the minutes are in the King's hand.

[3] State Papers, Dom.

London to Northumberland in the country, complaining of Somerset's efforts in favour of Gardiner, and his intrigues with the Catholics. That Cecil should resent, as Secretary of State, any movement that threatened Northumberland and the Protestant cause at the time was natural. It will be recollected that he did not become Northumberland's Secretary of State until the former had thrown over the Catholics,—but it was perhaps an ungenerous excess of zeal to be the first to denounce his former patron. At all events, Northumberland was delighted with the Secretary's action in the matter, and told Whalley so—"He declared in the end his good opinion of you in such sort, as I may well say he is your very singular good lord, and resolved that he would write at length his opinion unto you . . . for he plainly said ye had shown yourself therein such a faithful servant, and by that, most witty councillor unto the King's Majesty and his proceedings, as was scarce the like within his realm." Whalley concludes his letter by urging Cecil to remonstrate with Somerset. Whether he did so or not is unknown; but certainly for the next three months there is no hint of any serious renewal of the quarrel: the interminable proceedings against Gardiner continued, under Cecil's direction, without a word from Somerset, and the measures against the Princess Mary's mass continued unchecked.

The French alliance was now in full flush. All through the autumn the stately embassy from Henry II. confirming the treaty, and bringing the Order of St. Michael to Edward, was splendidly entertained at court; the Emperor's troubles were closing in around him; Northumberland could afford to flout his remonstrance about the treatment of the Princess Mary; and by the beginning of October, Northumberland's power was at its height. On the 4th October he assumed his dukedom,

Dorset was made Duke of Suffolk, the Earl of Wiltshire was created Marquis of Winchester, and Cheke and Cecil were dubbed knights (although several of the latter's friends had insisted upon calling him Sir William months before).[1] Then it was that the blow fell upon Somerset. We have seen how Cecil bore himself to his former master at the first hint of danger on the 14th October; and though we have no letters of his own to indicate his subsequent attitude, a few words in the confidential letters of his correspondents allow us to surmise what it was.

Somerset was imprisoned on the 16th October (1551). On the 27th, Pickering, the Ambassador in Paris, writes that "he is glad Cecil is found to be undefiled with the folly of this unfortunate Duke of Somerset." But Morysine, Cecil's old Lincolnshire friend, the Ambassador in Germany, reflects, evidently with exactitude, the tone which Cecil must have adopted. He speaks of Somerset as the Secretary's old friend, and congratulates Cecil that he has not been dragged down with him. "For it were a way to make an end of amity, if, when men fall, their friends should forthwith therefore be troubled." He plainly sees, he says, that the mark Cecil shoots at is their master's service; "A God's blessing! let the Duke bear his own burden, or cast it where he can."[2] Morysine might have saved his wisdom; Cecil would certainly bear no other man's burden if he could help it.

Through all this critical time Sir William was indefatigable. His wife lived usually retired from the court, at their home at Wimbledon; but Cecil's town house at Cannon Row, Westminster, was the scene of ceaseless business, for Petre, the joint-Secretary, was ill disposed, and did little. The Duchess of Suffolk, Lord Clinton, and all the Lincolnshire folk used Cecil unsparingly in

[1] State Papers, Foreign. [2] *Ibid.*

all their suits and troubles, and they had many. Cecil's own properties were now very extensive, and were constantly augmented by purchases and grants. He had been appointed Recorder of Boston in the previous year (May 1551). Northumberland consulted and deferred to him at every point; Cranmer sent to him the host of Protestant refugees from Germany and France: no matter what business was in hand, or whose it was, it inevitably found its way into Sir William Cecil's study, and by him was dealt with moderately, patiently, and wisely.

In the war of faiths he was the universal arbitrator, and his task was not an easy one. The clergy had sunk to the lowest depth of degradation, and cures of souls had been given by patrons to domestic servants, and often to persons unable to read. The returned refugees from Switzerland had many of them brought back Calvinistic methods and beliefs, and between their rigidity and the English Catholicism of Henry VIII. all grades of ritual were practised. Cranmer was at the head of a commission to settle a form of liturgy and the Articles for the Church, Cecil, of course, being a member. After immense labour, forty-two Articles were agreed upon—reduced to thirty-nine ten years afterwards—but before finally submitting them to Parliament and Convocation for adoption, Cranmer referred them absolutely to Cecil and Cheke, "the two great patrons of the Reformation at court."[1]

In foreign affairs, also, Cecil arranged everything but the main line of policy which Northumberland's plans dictated. We have seen how the question of aid to the Protestant princes of Germany was referred to his consideration, and the help refused. The subject was shortly made a much larger one by the utter defeat of the Emperor by his former henchman, Maurice of Saxony, and the invasion of Luxembourg by the French (July 1552). The

[1] Strype.

tables were now turned indeed. By the peace of Passau the Protestant princes extorted the religious liberty they had in vain prayed for, and it was seen that for a time Charles's power was broken. A considerable party in England, faithful to old traditions, were in a fever of alarm at the growth of the power of France, and Stukeley told the King that Henry II. had confided to him his intention to capture Calais.[1]

The Emperor, ready to snatch at any straw, sent an ambassador to England in September 1552 to claim the aid to which, under the treaty of 1542, he was entitled from England if France invaded his territory. The whole question was referred to Cecil; and, as a specimen of his patient, judicial style, his report, as given in the King's Journal, is reproduced here. It will be seen that he affects impartially to weigh both sides, but his fear of French aggression is made as clear as was prudent, considering Northumberland's leanings.[2]

[1] King Edward's Journal (Burnet).

[2] In Sir William Cecil's handwriting.

"*Question:*—

1552 Windsor. 23 Sep., 6° Ed. VI.

"1. Whether the K. Mtie shall enter into the ayd of the Emperor.

"*Answer.* HE SHALL.

a pacto

"1. The Kyng is bound by the treaty, and if he will be helped by that treaty he must do the reciproque.

a periculo vitando

"2. If he do not ayde, the Emperor is like to ruyne and consequently the House of Burgundy come to the French possession, which is perilous to England, and herein the greatness of the French King is dreadfull.

Religio Chrisana

"3. The F. King bringeth the Turke into Chrendome and therefore that exploit be stayed.

periculum violati pacti

"4. If the Emperor for extremitie should agree now with the F. the said perill were dooble grettur. First th' Emperor's offence for lacke of ayde. 2. The F. King's enterprises towards us; and in this peace the bishop of Rome's devotion towards us.

pro Republica et patria

"5. Merchants be so evill used that both for the losse of goods and honour some remedy must be sought.

pericula consequentia

"6. The F. Kynge's procedings be suspisiose to the realm by breaking and burning of our shippes, which be the old strength of this isle.

Throughout the whole of his official life this was the way in which he dealt with all really important questions referred to him, and his leading principle was to

"*Answer.* HE SHALL NOT.

difficile quasi impossibile "1. The ayde is too chargeable for the cost, and almost impossible to be executed.

solitudo in periculis "2. If the Emperor should dye in this confederacy we should be left alone in the warr.

amicorum suspitio vitanda "3. It may be the German Protestants might be more offended with this conjunction with the Emperor, doubting their owne cause.

speran-dum bene ab amicis "4. The amytie with France is to be hooped will amende and continue and the commissioner's coming may perchance restore.

"COROLLARIUM OF A MEANE WAY.

judicium "1. So to helpe the Emperor as we maye also joine with other Christian princes and conspyre against the F. King as a common enemy to chrēdome.

"REASONS FOR COMMON CONJUNCTION.

auxilia communa "1. The cause is common and therefore there will be more parties to it.

sumptus vitandi "2. It shall avoyd the chargeable entry into ayde with the Emperor accordyng to the treaties.

amicorum copia "3. If the Emperor should dye or breake off, yet it is most likely some of the princes will remayne so as the K. Mā shall not be alone.

dignitas causæ "4. This friendship shall much advance the King's other causes in Chrēndome.

pro fide et religione "5. It shal be more honourable to breake with the F. Kyng for this common quarrel of Chrēndome.

"REASONS AGAINST THIS CONJUNCTION.

inter multos nihil secretum amiciæ irritatæ "1. The treaty must be with so many parties that it can nether be spedely nor secretly concluded.

"2. If the matter be revealed and nothing concluded then consider the F. Kyng's offence, and so may he at his leisure be provoked to practice the like conjunction agaynste England with all the papists.

"The above is in Cecil's handwriting. To it the young King himself has added in his own boyish hand.

"CONCLUSION.

1. "The treaty to be made wth the Emperor and by the Emperor's meanes wth other princes.

strike a middle course, which would allow England to remain openly friendly with the House of Burgundy without breaking with France, and to keep the latter power out of Flanders, while still defending Protestantism, which the ruler of Flanders was pledged to destroy.

How his actions usually squared with his axioms is seen, amongst other things, from his constant efforts to extend the commerce and wealth of England. Amongst the apophthegms which he most affected are the following:[1] "A realm can never be rich that hath not an intercourse and trade of merchandise with other nations," and "A realm must needs be poor that carryeth not out more (merchandise) than it bringeth in." In consequence of the privileges granted to the Hanse merchants, nearly the whole of the export trade of England had been concentrated into the hands of foreigners, and in the year that Cecil was appointed Secretary of State, the Steelyard Corporation is said to have exported 44,000 lengths of English cloth, whereas all the other London merchants together had not shipped more than 1100 lengths.[2] Cecil was in favour of establishing privileged cloth markets at Southampton and Hull, and of placing impediments on the exportation of cloths first-hand by foreigners, until the new markets had succeeded in attracting customers from abroad, so that the merchants'

"2. The Emperor's acceptation to be understood before we treat anything against the F. King."

After long reasoning it was determined to send to Mr. Morysine willing him to declare to the Emperor that "i haveing pitee as al other Christian princes should have on the envasion of Christendome by the Turkes would willingly joine with the Emperor and other states of the Empire if the Emp. could bring it to passe in some league against the Turke and his confederates but not to be knowen by the F. King . . . Morysine to say he hath no more commission but if the Emperor will send a man to England he shall know more. This was done on intent to get some friends. The reasonings be in my deske."

[1] *Desiderata Curiosa.* [2] Nares.

profits would remain in England as well as the money spent here by the foreign buyers. Although this particular project ultimately fell through, owing to the King's death and other causes, Cecil throughout his life laboured incessantly to increase English trade and navigation, by favouring the establishment of foreign weavers in various parts of the country, by laws for the protection of fisheries, by the promotion of trading corporations, like the Russian Company, of which he was one of the founders, by the rehabilitation of the coinage, and by a host of other measures, to some of which reference will be made in their chronological order.

The position of affairs during the last months of Edward's life was broadly this: Protestant uniformity was being imposed upon the country with a severity unknown under the rule of Somerset; Northumberland's plans for the elevation of Jane Grey to the throne were maturing; Southampton, Paget, Arundel, Beaumont, and the Catholics were in disgrace or exile; and De Noailles, the new French Ambassador, was working his hardest to help Northumberland, when the time should come, to exclude from the throne the half-Spanish Princess Mary. But though Sir William Cecil was the channel through which most of the business passed, he avoided as much as possible personal identification with Northumberland's plans. It must have needed all his tact, for Northumberland consulted and deferred to him in everything, and as the time approached for him to act, was evidently apprehensive, and stayed away from the Council. This was resented by his colleagues, as will be seen from his letter to Cecil of 3rd January 1553[1] from Chelsea, saying that "he has never absented himself from the King's service but through ill-health. The Italian proverb is true: a faithful servant will become a perpetual ass. He

[1] State Papers, Dom.

wishes to retire and end his days in tranquillity, as he fears he is going to be very ill." When it came to illness, diplomatic or otherwise, Cecil was a match for his master. He had been, according to his diary, in imminent danger of death in the previous year, at his house at Wimbledon; and in the spring of 1553 he again fell seriously sick. During May, Secretary Petre constantly wrote to him hoping he would soon recover and be back again at court. Lord Audley comforted him by sending several curious remedies for his malady, amongst which is "a stewed sowe pygge of ix dayes olde";[1] and the Marquis of Winchester was equally solicitous to see the Secretary back to the Council again. Northumberland evidently tried to keep him satisfied by grants and favours, for he conferred upon him a lease of Combe Park, Surrey, part of Somerset's lands; the lands in Northampton held for life by Richard Cecil, his father, were regranted to Sir William on his death, and during the Secretary's illness and absence from court he received the office of Chancellor of the Order of the Garter, with an income of 100 marks a year and fees.[2] But Cecil's illness, real or feigned,[3] made him

[1] Another remedy was a hedgehog stewed in rose-water.

[2] The office at first entailed considerable expense to him. In his diary there is an entry on 12th April, "Paid the embroiderer for xxxvi. schutchyns for my servants coats at iis each . iiil xiis;" and in a letter (State Papers, Dom.) from Petre to Cecil he tells him that the "fashion of his robes" will be decided when *Garter* comes to court.

[3] Strype regards the illness as being a diplomatic one, and I am inclined to side with him; but it is only fair to say that Cecil's old friend Dr. Wotton, Ambassador in France, attributed it to overwork. He writes (State Papers, Foreign), 21st June: "Yow perceive yow must needes moderate your labour, your complexion being not strong ynough to continue as yow begone; and my Lords, I doubt not, will not be so unreasonable as to requyre more of yow than yow be able to do. A good parte of the labour which was wont to lye on the Clerkes of the Counsell's hands is now turned to yow, whereof I suppose yow may easily disburden yourself. It is better to do so betimes than to repent the not doinge of it after, when it shalle be too late."

in no hurry to return and take a prominent part in Northumberland's dangerous game, which was now patent. During his absence his brother-in-law, Sir John Cheke, was appointed as an additional Secretary of State to help Petre (June 1553), and his fervent Protestantism and weakness of will made him a less wary instrument than Sir William in the final stages of the intrigue.

It was during Cecil's absence from court in May that Lady Jane Grey was married to Northumberland's son Guildford Dudley;[1] but by the time the plot was ready for consummation, Sir William could stay away no longer, and was at work again in his office. The letter, dated 11th June 1553, addressed to the Lord Chief-Justice and other judges, summoning them to the royal presence, was signed by Cecil, as well as by Cheke and Petre. When the young King handed to the Chief-Justice a memorandum of his intention to set aside King Henry's will, and leave the crown to the descendants of Henry's youngest sister Mary, to the deprivation of his daughters, the Chief-Justice told him that such a settlement would be illegal. The King insisted that a new deed of settlement must be drawn up. The next day at Ely Place, when Northumberland threatened Chief-Justice Montagu as a traitor, Petre was present, but not Cecil; but he must have been at the remarkable Council meeting on the 14th June, when the Chief-Justice and the other judges with tears in their eyes were hectored into drawing up the fateful will disinheriting Mary and Elizabeth; for upon Northumberland insisting that every one present

[1] The ceremony took place at Durham House, in the Strand, which had been granted by Somerset as a town residence for the Princess Elizabeth, but which Northumberland had, much to Elizabeth's indignation, exchanged, without her acquiescence, for Somerset's unfinished palace in the Strand. In answer to her remonstrances, Northumberland humbly protested that he had no desire to offend her Grace, but he made no alteration in his arrangements.

should sign the document, he, Cecil, like the rest of them —with the honourable exception of Sir John Hales— dared not refuse, and appended his name to it. He was probably sorry that his illness did not delay him a little longer at Wimbledon, for shortly before he had, in a conversation with Roger Alford, one of the confidential members of his household, expressed an intention to be no party to a change in the order of the succession. Alford relates the story.[1] He was walking in Greenwich Park with Cecil, when the latter told him that he knew some such plan was in contemplation, "but that he would never be a partaker in that device." If Alford is to be believed, Northumberland was from the first suspicious of Cecil's absence. He says that the Secretary feared assassination, and went armed, against his usual practice, visiting London secretly at night only, and concealed his valuables. His household biographer also says that he incurred the particular displeasure of Northumberland "for mislyking or not consenting to the Duke's purpose touching the Lady Jane."[2] And Alford, in his testimony in Cecil's favour, asserted that the latter told him that he had refused to sign the settlement as a Councillor, but only did so as a witness, which the paper itself disproves. The position of Cecil was indeed a most difficult one. He was not a brave or heroic man, he hated extreme courses, and this was a juncture where his usual non-committal *via media* was of no avail. Of the two evils he chose the lesser, and not only signed the settlement like the rest of the Councillors, but also the instru-

[1] Strype's "Annals," vol. iv. Alford's deposition was made at Cecil's request twenty years afterwards, and doubtless echoes what Cecil desired to be said.

[2] This statement also must be taken for what it is worth. It was written in Cecil's extreme old age—or soon after his death—and of course reflected his own version of affairs. It was natural that after the fall of Jane, and particularly when he was Elizabeth's minister, he should be anxious to dissociate himself from an act which deprived the Queen of her birthright.

ment by which certain members pledged themselves on oath to carry it out. But though he, like others, was terrorised into bending to Northumberland's will, it is certain that he disliked the business, made no secret of his unwillingness to acquiesce in it, and separated himself from it at the earliest possible moment that he could do so with safety. There is in the Lansdowne MSS.[1] a paper in Cecil's hand, written after the accession of Mary, in which is contained his exculpation. As it throws much light on the matter, and upon Cecil's own character, it will be useful to quote it at length. It is headed "A briefe note of my submission and of my doings.

"1. My submission with all lowliness that any heart can conceive.

"2. My misliking of the matter when I heard it secretly; whereupon I made conveyance away of my lands, part of my goods, my leases, and my raiment.

"3. I determined to suffer for saving my conscience; whereof the witnesses, Sir Anthony Cooke, Nicholas Bacon, Esq., Laurence D'Eresby of Louth; two of my suite, Roger Alford and William Cawood.

"4. Of my purpose to stand against the matter, be also witness Mr. Petre and Mr. Cheke.

"5. I did refuse to subscribe the book when none of the Council did refuse: in what peril I refer it to be considered by them who know the Duke.

"6. I refused to make a proclamation, and turned the labour to Mr. Throckmorton, whose conscience, I saw, was troubled therewith, misliking the matter.

"7. I eschewed writing the Queen's highness bastard, and therefore the Duke wrote the letter himself, which was sent abroad in the realm.[2]

[1] B. M. Lans. MSS., 2, 102.

[2] Notwithstanding this protest, there is in Lansdowne MSS., 1236, No. 15, a draft or copy, *in Cecil's own handwriting*, of the document referred to,

"8. I eschewed to be at the drawing of the proclamation for the publishing of the usurper's title, being specially appointed thereto.

"9. I avoided the answer of the Queen's highness' letter.

"10. I avoided also the writing of all the public letters of the realm.

"11. I wrote no letter to Lord La Warr as I was commanded.

"12. I dissembled the taking of my horse and the raising of Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire, and avowed the pardonable lie where it was suspected to my danger.

"13. I practised with the Lord Treasurer to win the Lord Privy Seal, that I might by Lord Russell's means cause Windsor Castle to serve the Queen, and they two to levy the west parts for the Queen's service. I have the Lord Treasurer's letter to Lord St. John for to keep me safe if I could not prevail in the enterprise of Windsor Castle, and my name was feigned to be Harding.

"14. I did open myself to the Earl of Arundel, whom I found thereto disposed; and likewise I did the like to Lord Darcy, who heard me with good contentation, whereof I did immediately tell Mr. Petre, for both our comfort.

"15. I did also determine to flee from them if the consultation had not taken effect, as Mr. Petre can tell, who meant the like.

addressed to the Lords-Lieutenant of counties, in which they are begged "to disturbe, repell, and resyste the fayned and untrue clayme of the Lady Mary, basterd daughter of . . . Henry VIII." The date of this is the 10th July; but the Duke of Northumberland's draft of the same letter is endorsed by Cecil, 12th July. This would seem to suggest that at all events Cecil had helped the Duke in the composition of the first draft of the document. On the dorse of Northumberland's copy (Lansdowne MSS., 3, 34), Cecil has written: "First copy of a l're to be wrytte from ye Lady Jane . . . wrytte by ye Duk of Northūblā." But, as stated above, the date of his own copy is two days earlier.

"16. I purposed to have stolen down to the Queen's highness, as Mr. Gosnold can tell, who offered to lead me thither, as I knew not the way.

"17. I had my horses ready at Lambeth for the purpose.

"18. I procured a letter from the Lords that the Queen's tenants of Wimbledon should not go with Sir Thomas Caverden; and yet I never gave one man warning so much as to be in readiness, and yet they sent to me for the purpose, and I willed them to be quiet. I might as steward there make for the Queen's service a hundred men to serve.

"19. When I sent into Lincolnshire for my horses, I sent but for five horses and eight servants, and charged that none of my tenants should be stirred.

"20. I caused my horses, being indeed but four, to be taken up in Northamptonshire; and the next day following I countermanded them again by my letters, remaining in the country and notoriously there known.

"21. When this conspiracy was first opened to me, I did fully set me to flee the realm, and was dissuaded by Mr. Cheke, who willed me for my satisfaction to read a dialogue of Plato where Socrates, being in prison, was offered to escape and flee, and yet he would not. I read the dialogue, whose reasons, indeed, did stay me.

"Finally, I beseech her Highness that in her grace I may feel some difference from others that have more plainly offended and yet be partakers of her Highness' bountifulness and grace; if difference may be made I do differ from them whom I served, and also them that had liberty after their enforcement to depart, by means whereof they did, both like noblemen and true subjects, show their duties to their sovereign lady. The like whereof was my devotion to have done if I might have had the like liberty, as knoweth God, the searcher of

all hearts, whose indignation I call upon me if it be not true.

"'Justus adjutorius meus Dominus qui salvos facit rectos corde'—'God save the Queen in all felicity,'

"W. CECILL."[1]

The document shows us the real William Cecil. It is probably quite true: he had taken care, whilst remaining a member of Northumberland's Council, and openly acquiescing in his acts, to make himself safe in either case. Throgmorton and Cheke might be made scapegoats—as Davison was years afterwards—but Jane or Mary, Protestant or Catholic, the first consideration for William Cecil was not unnaturally William Cecil's own head. He was probably not worse than the other members of the Council, for most of them acted in a similar manner, and when at length they turned against Northumberland, and openly declared for Mary, Sir William was safe to choose the winning side.

King Edward died at Greenwich on the 6th July 1553, and on the 10th, Lady Jane was proclaimed Queen by virtue of his settlement by patent.[2] Two days afterwards the Council in the Tower learnt that the Lady Mary was rallying powerful friends about her in Kenninghall Castle, Norfolk, and it was agreed that Queen Jane's father, the Duke of Suffolk, should lead a force to capture and bring her to London. But the girl Queen begged so hard that her father might remain by her side that her tears prevailed; "whereupon the Councell perswaded the Duke of Northumberland to take that voyage upon him, saying that no man was so fit therefor, because

[1] This interesting document is also printed in Tytler's "Edward VI. and Mary."

[2] An early copy of this document is in Harl. MSS., 35, and the original draft or "devise" is in Petyt Papers, Inner Temple Library. See also Strype and Burnet.

he had atchieved the victorie in Norfolk once already, . . . besides that, he was the best man of war in the realm. . . . 'Well,' quoth the Duke then, 'since ye think it good I and mine will goe, not doubting of your fidelity to the Quene's Majesty, which I leave in your custody'"[1]

Northumberland hurriedly completed his preparations at Durham Place, and urged the Council to send powers and directions after him to reach him at Newmarket. He insisted upon having the warrant of the Council for every step he took in order to pledge them all; but at the farewell dinner-party with them it is clear that his mind was ill at ease, and his heart already sinking. He appealed humbly to his colleagues not to betray him. "If," he said, "we thought you wolde through malice, conspiracie, or discentyon, leave us your frendes in the breers (briars) and betray us, we could as well sondery (sundry) ways foresee and provide for our own safeguards as any of you by betraying us can do for yours." He reminds them of their oath of allegiance to Queen Jane, made freely to her, "who by your and our enticement is rather of force placed therein than by hir owne seking;" again points out that they are as deeply pledged on each point as he himself. "But if ye meane deceat, though not furthwith, God will revenge the same. I can say no more, but in this troblesome tyme wishe you to use constaunte hartes, abandoning all malice, envy, and privat affections." Some of the Council protested their good faith. "I pray God yt be so," quod the Duke; "let us go to dyner."[2]

Cecil must have been present at this scene, and when Northumberland left London on his way to Cambridge, "none," as he himself remarked, "not one, saying God spede us," Sir William must have known as well, or

[1] "Queen Jane and Queen Mary," Camden Society.

[2] Harl. MSS., 194. Also Hollingshead and "Queen Jane and Queen Mary."

better, than any of them that the house of cards was falling, and that Northumberland was a doomed man. The moment he was gone, Cecil, like the rest of them, strove to betray him. The ships on the east coast declared for Mary, the people of London were almost in revolt already, the nobles in the country flocked to the rightful Queen. On the 19th July, Mary was proclaimed by the Council at Baynard's Castle, and the joy was general: "the Earle of Pembroke threwe awaye his cape full of angeletes. I saw money throwne out at windowes for joy, and the bonfires weare without nomber," says an eye-witness.[1] Sir John Cheke was present at this stirring scene, upon which he must have looked with a wry face; but, as we have seen by his submission, Cecil had already been busy trimming and facing both ways. He first sent his wife's sister, Lady Bacon, to meet the new Queen, whom she knew, and as soon as might be himself started for the eastern counties, to greet the rising sun.[2] Lady Bacon had paved the way, and, to make quite sure, Cecil sent his henchman Alford ahead to see her at Ipswich, and learn what sort of reception her brother-in-law might expect. Her message was "that the Queen thought well of her brother Cecil, and said he was a very

[1] Harl. MSS., 353.

[2] It is not quite clear whether Cecil preceded or followed Arundel and Paget in their journey to meet the Queen. It is nearly certain that Cecil started after them. They were certainly present at the proclamation at Baynard's Castle on the 19th July, whereas Cecil does not appear to have been there. The letter, moreover, written the same morning from the Tower by the Council to Lord Rich, exhorting him to stand firm for Jane (Lansdowne MSS., 3) which Cecil said was written by Cheke, is signed by all the Councillors in London, including Arundel, Paget, Petre, and Cheke, *but not by Cecil.* The letter to Mary from the Council, carried by Arundel and Paget, appears to have borne no signatures (Strype's "Cranmer"); but the letter to Northumberland shortly afterwards ordering him to obey the Queen bears Cecil's signature. Probably, therefore, Cecil found some excuse for absenting himself on the critical 19th July, and when Mary's triumph was assured, signed the denunciation of Northumberland, and at once started to greet the Queen.

honest man." Then Sir William went on, and met Mary at Newhall, Essex, where he explained matters as best he could. When he was reproached with arming his four horsemen to oppose Queen Mary, he explained, as we have seen, that he himself had secretly caused them to be detained. No doubt the sardonic disillusioned Queen must have smiled grimly as she read the shifty, ungenerous "submission," already quoted in full; and however "honest" she may have considered Lady Bacon's brother-in-law, she knew he was not a bold man or a thorough partisan of hers, and when her ministry was formed, Cecil was no longer Secretary—but he did not, like poor Sir John Cheke, find himself a prisoner in the Tower.

Sir William's entry in his journal on the occasion of the King's death is a curious one,[1] and seems to indicate his general dislike of his position under Northumberland, whose home and foreign policy, as we have seen, were both diametrically opposite to those dictated by the training and character of Cecil.[2] The only point upon which there could have been a real community of aims between them was that of religion, and on that point Northumberland, who subsequently avowed himself a Catholic,[3] was false to his own convictions.

[1] 7 Julii Libertatem adeptus sū morte regis et ex misere aulico factus libertas mei juris.

[2] An interesting letter from Northumberland to the Council and Secretaries of State, written during his illness (27th November 1552, State Papers, Foreign) shows how much Cecil and his colleagues distrusted Northumberland's new departure in foreign policy. The French Ambassador's secretary had desired audience of the Duke alone, to convey a private message from Henry II. to him. Northumberland knew that this would be resented by the Council, and wrote: "I have availed myself of my sickness to direct the Secretary, who was very importunate, to communicate what he had to say, to one of the Secretaries of State or to the Council. And thus I trust within a while, although I may be thought affectionate to the French, as some have reported me, yet I doubt not this way which I intend to use with them to continue but a little while in their graces, which I never desired in all my life but for the service of my master, as knoweth the Lord."

[3] Dalby's letter in Harl. MSS., 353.

During the whole of the reign of Edward, Cecil had continued to enrich himself by grants, stewardships, reversions, and offices; not of course to the same extent as Somerset, Northumberland, Clinton, or Winchester, for he was a moderate man and loved safety, but on the accession of Mary he must have been very rich. During his mother's life, which was a long one, he always looked upon Burghley House as hers, although he spent large sums of his own money upon buildings and improvements; but he inherited from his father large estates in Northamptonshire, Rutland, Lincolnshire, and elsewhere. We have already noticed that he obtained the Crown manor of Wimbledon and other grants; but, in addition to those already noted, he obtained, in October 1551, the period of Somerset's sacrifice, grants of the manor of Berchamstow and Deping, in Lincolnshire; the manor and hall of Thetford, in the same county; the reversion of the manor of Wrangdike, Rutland; the manor of Liddington, Rutland, and a moiety of the rectory of Godstow. He was a large purchaser of land also in the county of Lincoln; so that although his household historian asserts that his lands never brought him in more than £4000 a year, his expenses were on a very lavish scale, and he had, as his friend the Duchess of Suffolk says in one of her letters to him, brought his wares to a good market. By his embroiderer's account, already quoted, we see that at this period of his life he maintained thirty-six servitors wearing his badge and livery; but in the time of Elizabeth his establishments were on a truly princely footing. He had eighty servants wearing his livery, and we are told that the best gentlemen in England competed to enter his service; "I have nombered in his howse attending at table twenty gentlemen of his retayners of £1000 per annum a peece, in possession or reversion, and of his ordinarie men, as many more, some

worth £1000, some worth 3, 5, 10, yea, £20,000, daily attending his service."

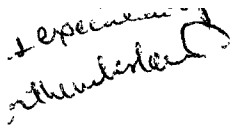
But though acquisitive and fond of surrounding himself with the accessories of wealth and great standing, he had few of the tastes of the territorial aristocracy, whom he imitated. Arms, sport, athletic exercises, did not appeal to him. From his youth he dressed gravely and soberly; and at a time, subsequently, when splendour and extravagance in attire were the rule, he still kept to his fur-trimmed gown and staid raiment. He was an insatiable book buyer and collector of heraldic and genealogical manuscripts. Sir William Pickering in Paris, and Sir John Mason, had orders to buy for him all the attractive new books published in France; and Chamberlain in Brussels had a similar commission. The former mentions in one letter (15th Dec. 1551, State Papers, Foreign) having purchased Euclid with the figures, Machiavelli, Le Long, the New Testament in Greek, *L'Horloge des Princes*, *Discours de la Guerre*, Notes on Aristotle in Italian, and others; and the Hatfield Papers contain very numerous memoranda of books and genealogies bought by Cecil, or sent to him as presents from his friends and suitors. Wotton, for instance, when he was abroad and wished to oblige his friend, says: "If I knew anye kind of bookes heere (Poissy) which yow like, I wold bye them for yow, and bring them home with some of myne owne. Here is *Clemens Alexandrinus* and *Theodoretus in Epistolas Pauli*, turned into Latin. But because I heere that yow have *Clemens Alexandrinus* in Greek already, I suppose yow care not for him in Latin."[1]

His love of study, too, extended to interest in others. He was a constant benefactor to Cambridge University, and St. John's particularly, and influenced the King[2] to

[1] Hatfield Papers. [2] Strype.

bequeath £100 per annum to the foundation in his will. Shortly before the young King's death, also, he appears to have granted to Cecil's own town of Stamford—almost certainly at his instance—funds for the foundation of a grammar school there, of which Sir William was to be the life governor, and there is ample evidence that the establishment of the large number of educational benefactions with which the young King signalised his reign —primarily at the instance of Bishop Hooper—was powerfully promoted by Cecil; who seems also, on his own account, to have always maintained a certain number of scholars,[1] and to have been the universal resource of students, teachers, and colleges, in their troubles and difficulties. The accession of Mary, which threw Cecil out of office, or, as he puts it, gave him his liberty, did not deprive him of his large means, or limit his enlightened activity in other directions. But for a time after the death of Edward, he remained, so far as so prominent and able a man could do so, simply a private citizen. His household biographer asserts "that Mary had a good liking for him as a Councillor, and would have appointed him if he had changed his religion." Although he puts a grandiloquent speech in Cecil's mouth, refusing office, saying much about preferring God's service before that of the Queen, it is extremely doubtful whether Mary ever offered to call him to her Council. Towards the end of her reign, when Elizabeth's early accession was inevitable, however, the Council itself was desirous of conciliating him. Lloyd ("State Worthies") says of him: "When he was out of place he was not out of service in Queen Mary's days, his abilities being as necessary in those times as his inclinations, and that Queen's Council being as ready to advance him *at last* as they were to *use* him all her reign."

[1] In Lansdowne MSS., 2, will be found many letters on these subjects to and from Cecil, showing the deep interest he took in educational matters.



CHAPTER III

1553–1558

DURING the trial and execution of Northumberland and his accomplices, Cecil remained prudently in the background. Gardiner, Norfolk, Courtney, Bonner, and the other prisoners in the Tower were released. Home and foreign policy changed, the Catholics were buoyed with hope, and the Emperor's Ambassador was in full favour, whilst the Protestants were timorous and apprehensive, and the French Ambassador ill at ease, for his King was at war with the Emperor, and had from the first endeavoured to minimise the claims of Mary.[1]

On the 3rd August the new Queen entered London with her sister near her, and preparations were at once set afoot for her coronation (1st October). Cecil was no longer in office, and was commanded by the Queen to send her the seals and register of the Garter on the 21st September;[2] but he appears to have gone to the expense of new liveries for his servants in honour of the occasion. Twelve of his servants were given garments of the best cloth with badges, eleven received one and a quarter yards of the best cloth each, with second-class cognisances, and nine more had cloth of second quality, one coat being left with Lady Cecil to bestow as she pleased.[3] On the same document Sir William himself has made numerous notes as to the price of these materials, which, if we did not already know it by many other testimonies, would

[1] *Ambassades de Noailles*, vol. ii., and Hatfield Papers, part i. 25.
[2] Hatfield Papers, part i., and Haynes. [3] Hatfield Papers.

prove that, though his expenditure was great, he was careful of the items of it. His father, the Yeoman of the Robes, had died in the previous year (1552), and apparently the office had remained in abeyance, being temporarily administered by Sir William. His neighbour Sir Edward Dymoke, of Scrivelsby, Lincolnshire, had, in accordance with his tenure, to act as champion at the Queen's coronation, and was entitled to his equipment out of the office of robes. A few days before the coronation ceremony Dymoke applied for his outfit. Some of the articles were not on hand and had to be bought of one Lenthal; and the champion begged Cecil to vouch for the purchase, consisting of "a shrowd, a girdle, a scabbard of velvett, two gilt partizans, a pole axe, a chasing staff and a pair of gilt spurs, the value in all being £6, 2s. 8d." Apparently Cecil took no notice of the application, and in an amusing letter at Hatfield, the champion complains bitterly, nearly two months after the coronation, that he could never get his outfit. Cecil insisted upon a warrant from the Queen; but, said Dymoke, he had received all his equipment without warrant at the previous coronation, and he prays Cecil not to be "more straytor" than his father was. He had his cup of gold, his horse, and trappings, and crimson satin, without warrant then, and why, he asks, should one be required now. "I do not pass so much of the value of the allowance as I do for the precedent to hinder those who do come after me, if I do lose it this time."

Cecil does not seem to have absented himself from court, though he passed more of his time than hitherto at Wimbledon. Wyatt rose and fell; Elizabeth and Courtney suffered under the Queen's displeasure; Cheke and Cooke went to exile; Cecil's old friend the Duchess of Suffolk and her husband Mr. Bertie fled to Germany; Carews, Staffords, Tremaynes, Killigrews, Fitzwilliams, the ex-

Ambassador Pickering, and hundreds like them, took refuge abroad from the country over which a Spanish King, with his half-Spanish Queen, were soon to be supreme. Cranmer, Cecil's friend from boyhood, and other Protestant Churchmen, filled the rooms in the Tower vacated by those whom Cecil had been active in prosecuting, but Cecil himself lived rich and influential, if no longer politically powerful, and no hand was raised against him. That he was a conforming Catholic is certain, quite apart from Father Persons' spiteful description of his exaggerated devotion; "frequenting masses, said litanies with the priest, laboured a pair of great beads which he continually carried, preached to his parishioners in Stamford, and asked pardon for his errors in King Edward's time." This statement of itself would not suffice were it not supported by better evidence; but although there is a dearth of such evidence at the beginning of Mary's reign, there is abundance of it later. At the Record Office, among other papers of the same sort, there exists the Easter book for 1556, headed, "The names of them that dwelleth in the pariche of Vembletoun that was confessed and received the Sacrament of the altar;" the first entry being, "My master Sir Wilyem Cecell, and my lady Myldread his wyff;"[1] and Cecil's accounts for this period contain many entries of the cost of his oblations and gifts to the altar. He retained, moreover, the benefices of Putney and Mortlake, of which he kept strict account; and in August 1557 the Dean and Chapter of Worcester addressed a letter of thanks to him for his annual contribution to his two churches, and assured him of their willingness to accede to his wishes and increase the stipends of the curates there.[2] There is therefore no doubt that, like Princess Elizabeth and most of those who afterwards became her ministers, Cecil was quite

[1] Reproduced by Tytler.

[2] Lansdowne MSS., 3.

ready, in outward seeming at least, to adopt the ritual decreed by the Court and Parliament.

Renard, the Emperor's Ambassador, had broached the idea of a marriage between Mary and Philip, the Prince of Spain, less than a week after the Queen's entry into London; and thenceforward the arrangements for the match went forward apace. The people generally were in an agony of fear; Gardiner himself, the Queen's Chancellor, and most of her wisest Councillors, looked coldly upon the idea; they would rather she had married Courtney, and formed a close political alliance with the House of Spain. But the Queen was a daughter of Catharine of Aragon, and the exalted religious ideas of her race had caused her to look upon herself as the divinely-appointed being who was to bring to pass the salvation of her people, and this she knew could only be done by the power and money that Spain could bring to her. The connection would enable her, too, to be revenged upon France, which had befriended her mother's supplanter, and was still subsidising revolution against her. Those who were Catholics first and Englishmen afterwards, applauded her determination to wed her Spanish cousin; and the priests in Rome watched, from the moment of her advent, for the possibility of the restoration of England to the faith, and the disgorging of the plunder of the Church by those who had swallowed it. Most of these saw in the Spanish match the probable realisation of their hopes.

Immediately after Mary's accession the Pope had appointed Cardinal Pole to negotiate with these ends. He was an Englishman of the blood royal, who had no special Spanish ends to serve: his one wish was to bring back England into the fold of the Church. But before he started on his journey to England, Charles V. took fright. His views were quite different. He and his son

wanted to get political control over England for their own dynastic interests. So long as the religious element helped them in this, they were glad to use it; but if the priests went too fast and too far, and caused disgust and reaction in England, their plans would fail. So, as usual when it was a choice between religion and politics by statesmen of that age, they chose politics. The difficulty was that the Churchmen had expected that the return of England to the fold would necessarily mean the restitution of all ecclesiastical property. Pole himself was full of this idea, and his first powers from the Pope gave him little or no discretion to abate the claim for entire and unconditional surrender of the Church plunder. But at the instance of the Emperor, the Pope was induced to grant to Pole full discretionary powers. Then he was persuaded to send the Legate to France and Brussels on his way to England, with the ostensible purpose of mediating a peace between France and the Emperor, but really in order that he might be influenced in the Spanish interest, and his departure for England was thus delayed until it was considered prudent to let him go. It was not until he had promised that he would only act in accordance with the advice of the new King-consort, Philip, that he was permitted to proceed on his mission, with the certainty now, that the restitution of the Church property would go no further than was dictated by the political interests which the Emperor had nearest his heart. This happened in November 1554, four months after the Queen's marriage, and the somewhat curious choice of Paget (Lord Privy Seal), Sir Edward Hastings, and Sir William Cecil, was made to go and meet the Legate at Brussels, and bring him to England. Their instructions,[1] evidently inspired by Philip, who was still in England, entirely confirm the above view of the sub-

[1] State Papers, Foreign.

ject. The envoys are to seek the Cardinal, and "to declare that the greatest, and almost the only, means to procure the agreement of the noblemen and others of our Council (to the re-entry of England into the Church) was our promise that the Pope would, at our suit, dispense with all possessors of any lands or goods of monasteries, colleges, or other ecclesiastical houses, to hold and enjoy quietly the same, without trouble or scruple." Herein the influence of the politicians is clearly visible; and the Churchmen for fifty years afterwards attributed the failure of Catholic attempts in England to God's anger at this paltering with the plunder of His property.[1] Cecil's voyage was a short one. The entry in his journal runs thus: "1554. *vi° Novembris (ii. Mariæ) capi iter cum Domino Paget et Magistro Hastings versus Casarem pro reducendo Cardinale;*" but in the little Perpetual Calendar at Hatfield the voyage is noted in English. The journal continues: "*Venimus Bruxelles* 11 *Novēbris;*" and then, "*Redivimus* 24° *Westmonsterij cū Card. Polo.*"

No more is said of the events of the journey, or of Cecil's negotiations with the Cardinal; but it may be surmised that Pole at first would not look very favourably upon Sir William, as during the correspondence with Somerset, in which Pole exhorted the Protector to desist from troubling Catholics, a somewhat rude communication was sent to him, which in his reply he attributed, not to the Protector himself, but to Cecil. It is probable that Cecil was chosen, because, though outwardly a Catholic, his views were known to be extremely moderate, and at the moment it was these views which were most in accordance with the interests of England and Spain from the point of view of the Emperor and his son. It may be assumed that a similar reason accounts for Cecil's appointment in the following May,

[1] "Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth," vol. iv. 629.

1555, to accompany the Cardinal to Calais, for the purpose of negotiating for a peace between France and the Emperor. Pole had offered the mediation of England to Noailles some months before, but the lukewarmness of the Emperor, the delay in the appointment of his envoys, and the French military successes in Piedmont, had dragged the matter out whilst an infinity of questions of procedure and personality were being slowly settled. The French Ambassador protested against the appointment of the Earl of Pembroke or the Earl of Arundel, especially the latter, a vain, giddy man, and a friend of Spain, to accompany the embassy. Gardiner, he said, would be sufficient to represent English interests, with Pole as Papal Legate; and the addition of either of the Earls or of Paget was looked upon as an indication of a desire rather to pick a fresh quarrel with France than to negotiate a peace.

Cecil would appear to have occupied quite a secondary position in the embassy, as he is never mentioned in the correspondence between the French envoys Constable Montmorenci and Cardinal Lorraine and Noailles describing the meetings. In any case, the negotiations, which took place at Marcq, equidistant from Calais, Ardres, and Gravelines, speedily fell through, and by the 26th June the attempt was abandoned; in consequence mainly of the insistence of the Emperor in the restoration of the Duke of Savoy to his dominions then occupied by the French. The apprehensions of the French Ambassador had not been entirely unfounded. It had been Philip's intention to ask the Parliament of 1554 for England's armed aid in favour of the Emperor, but the indiscreet zeal of the Churchmen had already brought about reaction, and the Parliament was hastily dissolved. In the new Parliament of 1555, Cecil was elected, as he insinuates not by his own desire, Knight

of the Shire for Lincoln. In the previous year (February 1554) he had requested the aldermen of the borough of Grantham to elect a nominee of his their member. What would, no doubt, have been a command when he was Secretary of State in the previous reign, could be disregarded under Mary, and the aldermen politely informed him that they had already made other arrangements.[1] It is quite understandable that to so prudent a man as Cecil it would have been much more agreeable to have been represented by a nominee than to have sat personally in the Parliament of 1555.

The Queen's pregnancy had turned out a delusion. It was seen by the Spaniards now that the Queen herself was but a puppet in the hands of the Council, and that Philip would never be allowed to rule England, as had been intended, solely for the benefit of Spanish interests. The imperial plot had failed; and on the 26th August 1555, the King-consort took leave of his heart-broken wife, and went to his duties elsewhere. As soon as he had gone, as Renard had wisely foretold, all barriers of prudence which had hitherto, to some extent, restrained the persecution of Protestants, were broken down. Philip left with the Queen strict instructions for the administration of affairs, and notes of all Council meetings were sent to him, in order that he might still keep some control. But Cranmer was arraigned, Ridley and Latimer were martyred, the restitution of alienated tithes, first-fruits, and tenths was proposed, the Protestant exiles abroad were recalled, under pain of confiscation of their property, the bishops were deprived, and throughout England the flames of persecution soon spread unchecked.

What King Philip wanted were English arms and money, to aid his father in the war, not the fires of

[1] Lansdowne MSS., 3.

Smithfield, or the blind zeal of the priests to set men's hearts against the cause of Rome, which was his main instrument. But the Parliament of 1555 and the Queen's Council were determined to withhold aid to the Emperor's war as long as they could. Money there was none, the English ships were rotting and unmanned in port, men-at-arms were sulky at the idea of fighting for the Spaniard; but burning Protestants and confiscating recusants' property cost nothing, and so the game went on in despite of absent Philip. Amongst the threatened exiles in Germany were many of Cecil's friends, especially the Duchess of Suffolk and Sir Anthony Cooke, who kept up a close correspondence with his son-in-law, but refused to conform and return to England. Whether it was the enactment against these friends,[1] or some other of the confiscatory or extreme measures of the Government, that Cecil opposed in the Parliament of 1555, is not quite certain; but an entry in his diary shows that he was in extreme peril as a result of his action.[2] The entry is, as usual, in Latin.

[1] See an account of the pursuit of these exiles in the narrative of John Brett ("Transactions Royal Hist. Soc.," vol. xi.), and also Foxe's "Acts and Monuments."

[2] A few months afterwards his brother-in-law, Sir John Cheke, wrote from abroad (February 1556), evidently in fear that Cecil was going too far in his conformity. "He hoped," he said, "that he would not suffer his judgment to be corrupted in these evil times by what a multitude of ignorance might approve" (Lansdowne MSS., 3). Cheke's evil fate fell upon him very shortly, as if in judgment for his own pharisaism. In the same spring he was lured by promise of pardon into Philip's Flemish dominions with Sir Peter Carew. He was treacherously seized, bound, and kidnapped on board a vessel at Antwerp (much as Dr. Story was in the reign of Elizabeth), brought to England, and lodged in the Tower. Threatened with the stake, he allowed Dr. Feckenham to persuade him to recant. Mary's Government made him publicly drink the cup of degradation to the dregs, and the unhappy man—pitied by his friends, and betrayed and scoffed at by his enemies—died of a broken heart the following year (September 1557). See Strype's "Memorials." Archbishop Parker's remark, written on the margin of one of Cheke's recantations, is the most merciful and appropriate to the case, "*Homines Sumus.*"

"On the 21st October, Parliament was celebrated at Westminster, in which, although with danger to myself, I performed my duty; for although I did not wish it, yet being elected a Knight of the Shire for Lincoln, I spoke my opinion freely, and brought upon me some odium thereby; but it is better to obey God than man." The household biographer gives a fuller account of what probably is the same matter: "In this Parliament (1555) Sir William Cecil was Knight for the County of Lincoln. In the House of Commons little was done to the liking of the court. The Lords passed a bill for confiscating the estates of such as had fled for religion. In the Lower House it was rejected with great indignation. Warm speeches were made on this, and other occasions, particularly in relation to a money bill, in all of which Sir William Cecil delivered himself frankly."[1] One day, especially, a measure was before the House which the Queen wished to pass, and Sir William Courtney, Sir John Pollard, Sir Anthony Kingston, with other men from the west, opposed. Sir William Cecil sided with them and spoke effectively, and after the House rose they came to him and invited themselves to dine with them. He told them they would be welcome "so long as they did not speak of any matter of Parliament." Some, however, did so, and their host reminded them of the condition. The matter was conveyed to the Council, and the whole of the company was sent for and committed to custody. Sir William himself was brought before his late colleagues and friends, Lord Paget and Sir William Petre. He said he desired they would not do with him as with the rest, which was somewhat hard, namely, to commit him first, and then hear him afterwards, but prayed them first to hear him, and then commit him if he were guilty; whereupon Paget replied,

[1] *Desiderata Curiosa.*

"You spake like a man of experience;" and Cecil, as usual, cleared himself from blame.[1]

During this period Cecil divided his time between Cannon Row, Wimbledon, and Burghley, occupying himself much whilst in the country with farming and horticulture. His accounts are very voluminous, and are frequently annotated in his own hand. Every payment is stated under its proper head—kitchen, cellar, buttery, garden, and so forth; and the whole of the household supplies, whether, as was usual, taken from his own farm, or purchased, are duly accounted for at current prices. The dinner-hour of the family was 11 A.M., before which prayer was read in the chapel, and the supper was served at 6 P.M.; these rules being observed at all his houses, whether he was in residence or not. His charities were always large, and in his later years reached an average of £500 a year; and wherever he had property there was a regular system of distribution of relief to the needy in the neighbourhood. His most intimate friends were still some of the first people in England. As a moderate man he had now commended himself to Pole; Lord Admiral Clinton, a great Lincolnshire magnate, was evidently by his letters on terms of familiarity with him; the Earl of Sussex, the Viceroy of Ireland, expressed himself anxious to do him service;[2] Sir Philip Hoby and Lord Cobham vied with each other in inducing him and Lady Cecil to visit them at their respective Kentish seats; and Lord John Grey, on the occasion of his wife being delivered of a "gholly boye," begs Cecil to stand godfather to the infant.[3] Cecil's wife had already given birth to a daughter, and in the Calendar Diary at Hatfield an entry

[1] *Desiderata Curiosa.*

[2] Sir Thomas Cornwallis to Cecil: Hatfield Papers, part i.

[3] Hatfield Papers, part i.

against 5th December 1556 records, "Natus est Anna Cecil," which event somewhat disappointed both Cecil and his father-in-law, Cooke, in his exile, as they had earnestly looked for a son. Cecil must have been a devoted husband, though probably an undemonstrative one, as the letters of Sir Anthony Cooke always praise him for his goodness, both to his daughter and to himself in his poverty and banishment. Sir Philip Hoby, in one of his hearty letters during Lady Cecil's confinement, expresses sorrow that Sir William cannot visit him. "You should have been welcome if my Lady might have spared you, to whom you have been as good a nurse as you would have her be to you;"[1] and seven weeks later he writes again (21st February), advising Cecil "to come abroad, and not tarry so long with my Lady, and in such a stinking city, the filthiest of the world." Sir Nicholas Bacon and his wife, Lady Cecil's sister, were also frequent and kindly correspondents; and the Countess of Bedford, who with her children were left by her husband to Cecil's care on the Earl's departure in command of the English contingent to aid the Emperor, referred all her business to him.[2] Cecil's life, indeed, at this period was that of a noble of great wealth and influence, surrounded by friends, occupied with the details of large estates and with studious pursuits, in great request as trustee and intermediary for other people's affairs, openly conforming in religion, but of acknowledged moderate views, and

[1] Hatfield Papers, part i.

[2] The powerful Earl of Bedford was a prime favourite of Philip—though afterwards so strong a Protestant—and had been sent to Spain to accompany the Queen's consort to England. He appears to have been on close terms of friendship with Cecil, who managed his affairs in his absence, and to whom he wrote an interesting account of the great victory of St. Quentin (Hatfield Papers). The friendship of such men as Bedford, Clinton, and Paget would of itself almost account for Cecil's immunity and favour under Philip and Mary.

keeping on fairly good terms with the party in power, as did Sir Nicholas Bacon, Sir Thomas Smith, Roger Ascham, and others in similar case.

But there was one element of Cecil's activity to which no undue prominence was given, although it was great and continuous—namely, his communications with the Princess Elizabeth and his prudent efforts in her favour. From his first official employment at court, he had been appealed to by the Princess in questions requiring discretion. When he was Secretary to the Protector (25th September 1549), Parry, the cofferer and factotum of Elizabeth, wrote to him the letter which has often been quoted,[1] in which he gives an account of the visit of the Venetian Ambassador to Ashridge: "Hereof her Grace hath, with all haste, commanded me to send unto you, and to advertise you, to the intent forthwith it may please you, at her earnest request, either to move my Lord's Grace, and to declare unto him yourself, or else forthwith to send word in writing, that her Grace may know thereby, whether she shall herself write thereof . . . and in case ye shall advise her Grace to write, then so forthwith to advertise her Grace. . . . Herein she desires you to use her trust as in the rest." It will be seen by this that Cecil was then considered by Elizabeth as her friend. Another letter from Parry (September 1551)[2] is still more cordial: "I have enclosed herein her Grace's letters, for so is her Grace's commandment, which she desires you, according to her trust, to deliver from her unto my Lord's Grace, taking such opportunity therein by your wisdom as thereby she may . . . hear from his Grace. . . . Her Grace commanded me to write this. 'Write my commendations in your letters to Mr. Cecil that I am well assured, though I send not daily to him, that he doth not, for all that, daily forget me'; say,

[1] State Papers, Dom. [2] *Ibid.*

indeed, I assure myself thereof.' . . . I had forgotten to say to you that her Grace commanded me to say to you for the excuse of her hand, that it is not now as good as she trusts it shall be; her Grace's unhealth hath made it weaker and so unsteady, and that this is the cause."

Elizabeth, in common with most other people, was also very anxious to put her business affairs into Cecil's hands, and in such matters as leases, sales of timber of her manors, and the like, Sir William's services and advice were often requisitioned by her. In April 1553 she had serious complaints to make of extortion and malversation on the part of the steward (Keys) of certain of her manors which had been dedicated to the support of the hospital of Ewelme; and she appointed Cecil as the principal member of a committee to examine closely into the whole matter, "as her Grace is determined to remove the violence and oppression, and to have the poor thoroughly considered."[1] At the time that Northumberland was casting about for a foreign husband for Elizabeth, some prince who, though of Protestant leanings, should not be powerful enough to force her claims to the crown, Cecil seems to have suggested the Duke of Ferrara's son Francesco, but the proposal came to nothing. It may, however, be accepted as certain that the intrigues of Noailles on the one hand to pledge Elizabeth to marry Courtney, as proposed by Paget, and the persistent attempts of the Spanish party to pledge her to Emmanuel Philibert, Duke of Savoy, found no support from Cecil, since one marriage would have played into the hands of France, and the other

[1] Cecil seems to have been greatly in request for commissions involving a knowledge of rural dilapidations and the management of landed estates. In March 1557 the Lords of Queen Mary's Council commissioned him to examine the damage done to Brigstock Park, Northampstonshire, and to place Sir Nicholas Throgmorton there as keeper (Lansdowne MSS., 3). He was also steward of Colly Weston and other manors belonging to Princess Elizabeth,

would have rendered the Catholics permanently supreme in England; and, as has already been seen, Cecil's great principle was to keep his country as far as possible free, both from Rome and from France. The consummate dexterity exhibited by Elizabeth during the troubled reign of Mary was exactly of a piece with Cecil's own management of his affairs at the same period; and although there is no proof that he in any way guided her action, it is in evidence that she kept up communication with him on many subjects, and it is in the highest degree probable that she asked his advice on the vital points, upon which on several occasions her very life depended. Camden expressly says that she did so, and he is confirmed by Cecil's household biographer; but if it be true, it must have been done with great caution and care, for Cecil to have escaped, as he did, all suspicion when Elizabeth herself was deeply suspected after Wyatt's rising. Cecil's advice to the Princess, if given at all, was probably to do as he himself endeavoured to do; namely, to conform as much as might be necessary for her safety, and to avoid entanglements or engagements of every description. This at all events was the course they both successfully followed.

Philip had at last dragged England into war against the wish of the whole of the Council except Paget, though the King had reluctantly to come and exert his personal influence on his wife before it could be done. At the beginning of July 1557 he left her for the last time, and in a month the victory of St. Quentin gave him the great chance of his life. He hesitated, dallied, and missed it; the English contingent sulky, unpaid, and discontented—the Spaniards said cowardly—clamoured to go home, and Philip, not daring to add to his unpopularity in England, let them go. Calais and Guines fell before the vigour of Francis of Guise (January 1558),

for the fortresses had been neglected both by Northumberland and Mary. When it was already too late, the King had urged the English Council to send reinforcements; but his envoy, Feria, crossed the Channel at the same time as the news that the last foothold of England on the Continent had gone.

Thenceforward it was evident that Mary's days were numbered, and eyes were already looking towards her successor. The war, never popular in England, became perfectly hateful. The people growled that waggon-loads of English money were being sent to Philip, and the Council, almost to a man, resisted as much and as long as they dared, Philip's constant requests for English aid. When Parliament and the Council had been cajoled and squeezed to the utmost, Feria left in July 1558 to join his master; but before doing so, he thought it prudent to pay a visit to Madame Elizabeth at Hatfield, with many significant hints of favour from his King in the time to come; none of which the Princess affected to understand. A few weeks before the Queen died, peace negotiations were opened between England, France, and Spain; the foolish Earl of Arundel, Dr. Thirlby (Bishop of Ely), and Cecil's friend Dr. Wotton being sent to represent England. On the 7th November the Queen was known to be dying, and the Council prevailed upon her to send a message to her sister confirming her right to succeed. Feria arrived a few days before unhappy Mary breathed her last, and already he found that "the people were beginning to act disrespectfully towards the images and religious persons."[1] From the 7th November until the Queen died, on the 17th, matters were in the utmost confusion. All the bonds were breaking, and no man knew what would come next. The Council had for months been drifting away from Philip, and during the

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth.

Queen's last days were openly turning to her Protestant successor.

But their duty kept them mostly at court; whereas Cecil, being free from office, went backwards and forwards between Cannon Row and Hatfield, making arrangements for the formation of a new Government when the sovereign should die. Feria writes that on the day the new Queen was proclaimed (17th November 1558), the Council decided that Archbishop Heath, Lord Admiral Clinton, the Earls of Shrewsbury, Pembroke, and Derby, and Lord William Howard should proceed to Hatfield, whilst the rest stayed behind; "but every one wanted to be the first to get out." When they arrived at the residence of the young Queen, Cecil was already there and the appointments decided upon. Cecil was the first Councillor sworn, and was appointed Secretary of State;[1] the others mentioned above, with Paget and Bedford, being subsequently admitted; and the faithful Parry, her cofferer, elevated to the post of Controller of the Household; whilst Lord Robert Dudley, the son of Northumberland, Cecil's former patron, was made Master of the Horse.

The Catholics, and especially the Spanish party, were in dismay. Changes met them at every turn. The Councillors who had fattened on Philip's bribes, turned against him openly, although some few, like Lord William Howard (the Lord Chamberlain), Clinton, and Paget, secretly offered their services for a renewed consideration. But it soon became evident that the two men who would have the predominant influence were Cecil and Parry, and they had never yet been bought by

[1] Feria had visited Elizabeth at Hatfield a few days before the Queen died, and had then written to Philip: "I am told for certain that Cecil, who was Secretary to King Edward, will be her Secretary also. He is considered to be a prudent, virtuous man, although a heretic."

Spanish money. Only a week after the Queen's accession, Feria wrote to Philip:[1] "The kingdom is entirely in the hands of young folk, heretics and traitors, and the Queen does not favour a single man . . . who served her sister. . . . The old people and the Catholics are dissatisfied, but dare not open their lips. She seems to me incomparably more feared than her sister, and gives her orders, and has her way, as absolutely as her father did. Her present Controller, Parry, and Secretary Cecil, govern the kingdom, and they tell me the Earl of Bedford has a good deal to say."

Before entering London from Hatfield, the Queen stayed for a day or two at the Charterhouse, then in the occupation of Lord North. All London turned out to do her honour, and she immediately made it clear to onlookers that she meant to bid for popularity and to depend upon the good-will of her subjects. On the 26th or 27th November the Spanish Ambassador went to the Charterhouse to salute her. He had been under Mary practically the master of the Council; but the new Queen promptly made him understand that everything was changed. Instead of, as before, having right of access to the sovereign when he pleased, he found that in future he and his affairs would be relegated to two members of the Council, and when he asked which two, the Queen replied, Parry and Cecil. Feria did his best to conciliate her—gave her some jewels he had belonging to the late Queen, and so forth; but when he mentioned that a suspension of hostilities had been arranged between the French and Spanish, she thought it was a trap to isolate her, and she dismissed the Ambassador coldly. When she had retired, Feria called Cecil and asked him to go in at once and explain matters to her, "as he is the man who does everything." The effects of Cecil's diplo-

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth.

macy were soon evident. The Queen smiled and chatted with Feria, took with avidity all the jewels he could give her, coyly looked down when marriage was mentioned, but would pledge herself to nothing. "She was full of fine words, however, and told me that when people said she was 'French,' I was not to believe it;"[1] but when the Ambassador treated such a notion as absurd, and endeavoured to lead her on to say that her sympathies were with Spain and against France, she cleverly changed the subject. Her sister, she said, had been at war with France, but she was not.

As has already been said, when the deputation of the Council arrived at Hatfield, Cecil was there before them, and had conveyed the news of her accession to the Queen. Naunton[2] says that when she heard it she fell on her knees and uttered the words, "*A Domino factum est illud, et est mirabile in oculis nostris.*" But whether this be true or not, it is certain that the intelligence did not come upon her as a surprise; for Cecil had already drawn up for her guidance a document which still exists,[3] providing for the minutest details of her accession. Some of these provisions were rendered unnecessary by the universal and peaceful acceptance of the new sovereign; but they exhibit the care and foresight which we always associate with the writer. The note runs as follows: 1. To consider the proclamation and to proclaim it, and to send the same to all manner of places and sheriffs with speed, and to print it. 2. To prepare the Tower and to appoint the custody thereof to trusty persons, and to write to all the keepers of forts and castles in the Queen's name. 3. To consider for the removing to the Tower, and the Queen there to settle her officers and Council. 4. To make a stay of passages to all the ports until a certain

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth. [2] *Fragmenta Regalia.*
[3] Cotton MSS., Titus cx.

day, and to consider the situation of all places dangerous towards France and Scotland, especially in this change. 5. To send special messengers to the Pope, Emperor, Kings of Spain and Denmark, and the State of Venice. 6. To send new commissioners (commissions ?) to the Earl of Arundel and Bishop of Ely (the peace envoys), and to send one into Ireland with a new commission; the letters under the Queen's hand to all ambassadors with foreign princes to authorise them therein. 7. To appoint commissioners for the interment of the late Queen. 8. To appoint commissioners for the coronation and the day. 9. To make continuance of the term with patents to the Chief-Justice, Justices of each Bench, Barons, and Masters of the Rolls, with inhibition. *Quod non conferant aliquod officium.* 10. To appoint new sheriffs under the Great Seal. 11. To inhibit by proclamation the making over of any money by exchange without knowledge of the Queen's Majesty, and to charge all manner of persons that have made, or been privy to any exchange made, by the space of one month before the 17th of this month. 12. To consider the preacher of St. Paul's Cross, that no occasion be given by him to stir any dispute touching the governance of the realm.

It will be seen that every necessary measure for carrying on peaceably the government and business of the country is here provided for. Within a week of the Queen's accession the religious persecutions all over the country had ceased, and a few days later all persons who were in prison in London as offenders against religion had been released on their own recognisances. The Queen had already foreshadowed her dislike to the harrying of Protestants by refusing her countenance to Bonner, the Bishop of London, when, with the other bishops, he met her on her approach to London. The

English refugees were flocking back home from Germany and Switzerland; and though, for the most part, the religious services were continued without marked change,[1] the Catholics saw that the day of their tribulation was coming, and were filled with indignation and fear. The measures suggested by Cecil as to the appointment of the preacher at Paul's Cross were doubtless adopted,[2] for there was no violent ecclesiastical pronouncement against the tendency of the new Government until the funeral of the late Queen, on the 13th December. White, Bishop of Winchester, preached the sermon, in which he attacked the Protestants in the most inflammatory language, quoting the words of Trajan: "If my commands are just, use this sword for me; if unjust, use it against me." It was not Elizabeth's or prudent Cecil's line, however, to adopt extreme measures at first, and the prelate was only kept secluded for a month in his own house. This is a fair specimen of the cautious policy adopted by Elizabeth. All of Mary's Council had been Catholics, many of them bigoted Catholics, and yet eleven of them were admitted to the Council of the new Queen; the principal change being the addition to them of seven known Pro-

[1] A proclamation was issued on the 27th December, that no alterations should be made in the rites and ceremonies of the Church, and that no unauthorised person should preach; but a few days afterwards orders were given that the Litany, Epistle, and Gospel should be read in English, as in the Queen's chapel, which was done on the following day, 1st January, Sunday (Hayward).

[2] Hayward's reference to this point would seem to prove that the sermons at Paul's Cross were discontinued altogether for some months. He says preachers had been warned—in accordance with Cecil's note—to avoid treating of controversial points, and to the raising of any "dispute touching government eyther for altering or retayning the present form. Hereupon no sermon was preached at Paules Crosse until the Rehearsall sermon was made upon the Sunday after Easter; at which tyme, when the preacher was ready to mount the Pulpit, the keye could not be found; and when by commandment of the Lord Mayor it was opened by the smyth, the place was very filthy and uncleane (Hayward's "Annals," Camden Society).

testants, who had, like Cecil, conformed in the previous reign—namely, Parr (Marquis of Northampton), Cecil's friend the Earl of Bedford, Sir Thomas Parry, Edward Rogers, Sir Ambrose Cave, Francis Knollys (the Queen's cousin), and Sir William Cecil; Sir Nicholas Bacon, Cecil's brother-in-law, another Protestant conformer, being shortly afterwards also appointed a Councillor and Lord Keeper, but not yet Chancellor, in the place of Heath, Archbishop of York.

CHAPTER IV

1559–1560

WE are told by his household biographer that two of Cecil's favourite aphorisms were: "That war is the curse, and peace the blessing of God upon a nation," and "That a realm gaineth more by one year's peace than by ten years' war." He and his mistress plainly saw that the first task for them to perform was to put an end to the disastrous and inglorious war into which for his own ends Philip had dragged England. Here, on the very threshold of Elizabeth's reign, Cecil's influence upon her policy was apparent and eminently successful. Cecil came from the Charterhouse to see Feria at Durham Place on the 24th November, saying that the Queen was sending Lord Cobham to inform Philip in Flanders officially of Queen Mary's death; but two days afterwards, one of Feria's spies at court, probably Lord William Howard, sent him word that this was not Cobham's only mission. He was to turn aside to Cercamp, on the French frontier, where the peace commissioners were assembled, except Arundel, who had hurried back as soon as he learnt of the Queen's death, in order to take fresh commissions from Elizabeth to Dr. Thirlby, Arundel, and Wotton. Feria, on this news, sent post-haste to Philip's Secretary of State, telling him to advise the Spanish "commissioners to keep their eyes on these Englishmen, in case this should be some trick to our detriment, as I was told nothing about his going to Cercamp till he (Cobham) had gone."[1]

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth.

But no trick was meant which should divide England from the House of Burgundy. The instructions carried by Cobham[1] were drafted by Cecil, and made the restitution of Calais the main point of the English demand; and Wotton was instructed to accompany Cobham to Philip, to persuade the latter to support the English in their demand. The commissioners, moreover, were instructed to insert in the treaty an article reserving all former treaties between England and the House of Burgundy. Before these instructions reached the hands of the commissioners, the suspension of hostilities for two months, which had so much disquieted the Queen when Feria told her of it, had been arranged. There is no doubt that the willingness of the French to agree to this suspension had been occasioned by their desire to enter into separate negotiations with the new Queen and her ministers, with the object of causing distrust between Spain and England; and here it was that Cecil had his first opportunity of proving his ability. Lord Grey had been captured by the French at Guînes, and early in January 1559 was allowed to return to England on parole, for the purpose, ostensibly, of arranging an exchange. He brought with him a message from the Dukes of Guise and Montpessart, proposing a secret arrangement between England and France. This was not the first intimation of such a desire; for some weeks before, a similar but less authoritative message was brought by the Protestant Florentine, Guido Cavalcanti, from the Vidame de Chartres; and Cavalcanti had gone back to France with kind but vague expressions of good-will from Elizabeth. When Lord Grey's message arrived, Cecil considered it in all its bearings, and drew up one of his judicial reports[2] in which Grey's answer to Guise

[1] Original draft in Cotton MSS., Cal. E. V.

[2] State Papers, Foreign; also printed *in extenso* in Forbes.

is dictated. With much circumlocution the Queen's willingness to make peace is expressed, "if all things done in her sister's time be revoked"; or, in other words, that Calais should be restored. But what Grey was not told was Cecil's recommendation to the Queen: "It seemeth necessary to allow this overture of peace, so as neither so to lyke of it, nor so to follow it, as thereby any jelusy shall arise in the hart of the King of Spain, but that principallv that that amyty be preserved and this not refused."

At the same time Dr. Wotton was to be instructed to go to Philip, and assure him emphatically, that the Queen was determined to remain friendly with him, and to let the whole world see it. She had had some hints that the French would like to approach her separately, but Philip "shal be most assured that nothyng shal be doone that maye in any respect either directly or indirectly prejudice this amyté betwixt their two Majesties, or anything doone but that his Majesty shal be made privy thereto; and thereof his Majesty shal be as well assured as he was of his late wyffe's proceedings here." Guido Cavalcanti arrived in France before Lord Grey's answer to Guise, and the Florentine came posting back to England with an affectionate letter from the King of France to Elizabeth.[1] Cecil's draft answer to this is just as judicious as the previous one. The King of France suggested that French and English commissioners might be mutually appointed to meet. This would never do, said Cecil; secresy was of the first importance, and a meeting of Englishmen and Frenchmen of rank would be noticed immediately. The negotiations had better be carried on directly by correspondence, and this was the course accepted by the French. Whilst the matter was thus being drawn out,

[1] Cotton MSS., Cal. E. V.; printed in Forbes.

the disposition of Philip was being sounded. Later in the reign, Elizabeth and Cecil had taken his measure, and could foresee his action, but in these first negotiations they were groping their way. Elizabeth had practically refused Philip's own suggestion of marriage made by Feria, and was now fencing with the proposals of his cousins the Archdukes; but she was careful not to drive Philip too far away. Reassuring letters came from Wotton. Much, he said, as Philip wished for peace, he did not believe he would make it alone, and leave both England and Scotland at the mercy of France, as "what woulde ensew thereof, a blynde manne can see."[1]

It was well that Cecil's caution disarmed Philip about the French advances; for Cavalcanti's movements and mission were soon conveyed to the Spanish King by his spies, and when, at the expiration of the two months' truce, the peace commissioners again met at Cateau-Cambresis, the King did his best to support the English commissioners in their demand for the restitution of Calais. His own agreement with France was easily made, for Henry II. was seriously alarmed now at the growth of the reform party, and gave way to Philip on nearly every point; whilst Philip himself was in great want of money, he hated war, and, above all, was burning to get back to the Spain he loved so much. But when, week after week, he saw that the English commissioners stood firm about Calais, he was obliged to speak out and assure Elizabeth that he could not plunge his country

[1] It must not be forgotten that Mary Stuart, the young Queen of Scots, was married to Francis, the heir to the French throne, and that the disappearance of Elizabeth from the throne would almost inevitably have meant the complete dominion of both Scotland and England by the French. This would have rendered the position of Spain in the Netherlands untenable, and would have destroyed the Spanish commerce, and the fact explains Philip's forbearance with Elizabeth in the earlier years of her reign. Both Cecil and the Queen were fully cognisant of the advantage they derived from the situation.

into war again for the purpose of restoring to England a fortress she had lost by her own laxity. At length, after infinite discussion, the English were forced to conclude a peace based upon the restitution of Calais in eight years, the demolition of the fortifications of Eyemouth, and a truce, to be followed by a peace, between England and Scotland.

In the meanwhile, before the peace of Cateau-Cambresis was signed, matters were growing more acrimonious in tone between England and Spain, owing to the ecclesiastical measures to which reference will be made presently, and also to the haughtiness and want of tact displayed by Feria in England. When, therefore, news came hither that amongst the conditions of the general peace was one providing for the marriage of Philip with Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of the French King, and the establishment of a close community of interests between France and Spain, a gust of apprehension passed over the English that they had been outwitted, and would have to face a combination of the two great rivals.

Paget—a thorough Spanish partisan and a Catholic—had foretold such a possibility as this in February, and had entreated Cecil to cling closely to Spain and continue the war with France.[1] But Cecil was wiser than Paget. He knew that by fighting for Calais we should lose both friendships, and he accepted the best terms of peace he could get. But when it was a question of the brotherhood between Spain and France, and whispers came from French reformers of the secret international league to crush Protestantism, then the only course to pursue was to disarm Philip and sow discord between Spain and France. When Feria saw the Queen on the 7th April 1559, the day on which the

[1] Hatfield Papers, part i. p. 151.

news of the signing of peace arrived in London, he found her pouting and coquettish that Philip should have married any one but her. "Your Majesty, she said, could not have been so much in love with her as I had represented, if you could not wait four months for her." But in the antechamber the Ambassador had a conversation with Cecil, "who is a pestilent knave, as your Majesty knows. He told me they had heard that your Majesty was very shortly going to Spain, and, amongst other things, he said that if your Majesty wished to keep up the war with France, they for their part would be glad of it. I told him he could tell that to people who did not understand the state of affairs in England so well as I did. What they wanted was something very different from that. They were blind to their own advantage, and would now begin to understand that I had advised what was best for the interests of the Queen and the welfare of the country; and I left them that day as bitter as gall."[1]

Paget wailed that the country was ruined; Alba, Ruy Gomez, and young De Granvelle tried to impress upon the English peace commissioners that England's only chance of salvation now lay in Philip's countenance.[2] Feria tried to frighten the Queen by assuring her that her religious policy was hurrying her and her country to perdition, and complained that certain comedies insulting to Philip which had been acted at court, had been suggested by Cecil, her chief minister. But she outwitted him at every point. "She was," he said, "a daughter of the devil, and her chief ministers the greatest scoundrels and heretics in the land." She disarmed him and his master by pretending that she would marry one of the Austrian Archdukes, who would depend entirely upon Spain; and Spanish agents were still fain to be civil to her, in

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth. [2] *Ibid.*

hope of bringing that about; though hot-headed Feria soon found his place intolerable, and relinquished it to a more smooth-tongued successor. The reason why Feria was so especially bitter against Cecil, was that to him was attributed the principal blame for forcing through Parliament, at the same time as the conclusion of the treaty of peace, the Act of Supremacy, recognising the Queen as Governor of the Anglican Church, and the Act of Uniformity, imposing the second prayer-book of Edward VI., but with some alterations of importance for the purpose of conciliating the Catholics. The oath of supremacy, however, was only compulsory on servants of the Crown; and the general tendency of the Council, and especially of the Queen, was to avoid offending unnecessarily the Catholic majority in the country. The Queen personally preferred a ceremonious worship, and several times assured the Spanish Ambassador that her opinions were similar to those of her father—that she was practically a Catholic, except for her acknowledgment of the papal supremacy.

Cecil's interests at this period were somewhat different from those of the Queen. Her great object was to consolidate her position by gaining the good-will of as many of her subjects as possible, apart from the question of religion. It was necessary for her to pass the Act of Supremacy, in order to establish the legality of her right to reign, and some sort of uniformity was necessary in the interests of peace and good government; but beyond that she was not anxious to push religious reform, for she disliked the Calvinists much more than she did the Catholics. But Cecil saw that if the Protestant Church were not established legally and strongly before Elizabeth died—and of course she might die at any time—the accession of Catholic Mary Stuart with French power at her back would mean the

end of his ministry, and probably of his life. He and Sir Nicholas Bacon, his brother-in-law, with Bedford, were consequently regarded by the Spaniards as the principal promoters of religious changes. They tried hard to divert him, and in the list of Councillors who were to receive pensions from Spain he is down for a thousand crowns;[1] but though he treated the Spaniards with great courtesy and conciliation, they do not appear to have influenced his policy by a hair's-breadth. Parry, the Controller, now Treasurer of the Household, was a man of inferior talent, and was apparently jealous of Cecil. Feria, despairing of moving Cecil, consequently endeavoured to influence the Queen by fear through Parry. On the 6th March, during the passage of the ecclesiastical bills through Parliament, the Ambassador, with the Queen's knowledge, arranged to meet Parry in St. James's Park; but at the instance of Elizabeth, who did not desire the rest of her Council to see her confidential man in conference with Feria, the meeting-place was changed to Hyde Park, "near the execution place." The Ambassador urged upon Parry that the proposed religious measures would certainly bring about the Queen's downfall. Parry promised that the Queen would not assume the title of Supreme Head of the Church, but would call herself Governor. But this was all Feria could get; for a week after, when he saw the Queen, he "found her resolved about what was passed in Parliament yesterday, which Cecil and Vice-Chamberlain Knollys and their followers have managed to bring about for their own ends." The Queen was excited and hysterical. She was a heretic, she said, and could not marry a Catholic like Philip. Feria endeavoured to calm and flatter her; but he assured her that if she gave her consent to the bills she

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i. p. 11.

would be utterly ruined. She promised him that she would not assume the title of Supreme Head; but she said that so much money was taken out of the country for the Pope that she must put an end to it, and the bishops were lazy poltroons, whereupon Feria retorted angrily, and Knollys purposely put an end to the conversation by announcing supper. Parry's influence was small and decreasing. "Although," says Feria, "he is a favourite of the Queen, he is not at all discreet, nor is he a good Catholic, but, still, he behaves better than the others. Cecil is very clever, but a mischievous man, and a heretic, and governs the Queen in spite of the Treasurer (Parry);[1] for they are not at all good friends, and I have done what I can to make them worse."[2] Cecil, of course, had his way, and the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity received the royal assent within a few weeks of this time (April 1559).

In the meanwhile both Cecil and the Queen worked hard to divert or mollify the irritation of the Spaniards caused by the religious measures. The pretence of a desire on the part of the Queen to marry an Austrian Archduke was elaborately carried on. Envoys from the Emperor went backwards and forwards. The sly, silky old Bishop of Aquila, the new Spanish Ambassador, tried to draw the Queen into a position from which she could not recede. She was coy, interesting, unsophisticated, and cunning by turns, but never compromised herself too far. The object was simply to keep the Spaniards from breaking away whilst pursuing her own course, and this object was effected.

The treaty of Cateau-Cambresis was ratified with great ceremony in London at the end of May: François de

[1] Parry had just been made Treasurer of the Household *vice* Sir Thomas Cheynes.

[2] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.

Montmorenci and a splendid French embassy were entertained at Elizabeth's court,[1] the Emperor's envoy being present at the same time to push the Archduke's suit. It was Cecil's cue to pretend to the Spaniards that the French were now very affectionate, and one day after some vicarious love-making with the Queen on behalf of the Archduke, the Bishop had a long conversation with the Secretary. The latter hinted that a French match had been offered to the Queen, and asked his opinion of it. If it had not been for the dispensatory power of the Pope being necessary, the Queen, said Cecil, would have married Philip; "but the proposal involved religious questions which it would be fruitless now to discuss, as the matter had fallen through." The object of this, of course, was to attract the Spaniards, first by jealousy of the French, and next by a show of sympathy with Spain. For reasons already set forth with regard to English succession, Philip was just as anxious as Cecil to avoid a quarrel. "I was glad," writes the Bishop, "to have the opportunity of talking over these matters with him, to dissipate the suspicion which I think he and his friends entertain, that they have incurred your Majesty's anger by their change of religion. I therefore answered him without any reproach or complaint, and only said that what had been done in the kingdom certainly seemed to me very grave, severe, and ill-timed, but that I hoped in God; and if He would some day give us a council of bishops, or a good Pope, who would reform the customs of the clergy, and the abuses of the court of Rome, which had scandalised the pro-

[1] The treaty was ratified simultaneously by the French King at Notre Dame, the English special Ambassador being the Lord Chamberlain, Lord Howard of Effingham. The correspondence on, and descriptions of, the ceremonies in France, will be found printed *in extenso* in Forbes. An account of the festivities in England will be found in Nichols' "Progresses of Queen Elizabeth," and in the Calendar of Venetian State Papers.

vinces, all the evil would be remedied; and God would not allow so noble and Christian a nation as this to be separated in faith from the rest of Christendom."[1] Thus the Catholic Bishop met the Protestant Cecil more than half-way; and no more triumphant instance can be found than this of the policy of the first few months of Elizabeth's reign. The faith of England had been revolutionised in six months without serious discontent in the country itself. Instead of hectoring Feria flouting and threatening, the bland Churchman sought to minimise differences of religion to the "pestilent knave" who had been principally instrumental in making the great change. From master of England, Philip had changed to an equal anxious to avoid its enmity. The altered position had been brought about partly by Philip's dread of half-French Mary Stuart succeeding to the English throne if Elizabeth should disappear, partly by the studious moderation of the English ecclesiastical measures, and partly by the care taken by Cecil and the Queen to keep alive the idea that the French were courting their friendship, whilst they themselves preferred the old connection with the House of Burgundy.

How vital it was for England to conciliate Philip at this juncture was evident to those who, like Cecil, were behind the scenes, although the extreme Protestants in the country were somewhat restive about it. Before the treaty of peace with France was negotiated, at the very beginning of the year 1559, Cecil drew up an important state paper for the consideration of the Council, discussing the probability of an immediate French attack upon England over the Scottish border in the interests of Mary Stuart. The religious disturbances in Scotland had necessitated the sending of a considerable French force to the aid of the Queen Regent, and Cecil says

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.

that a large army of French and German mercenaries was already collected, which it was doubtful whether the English could resist. The questions he propounded to the Council were whether it would be better to seize the Scottish ports at once before the French fleet arrived, or to place England in a state of defence and await events. The latter course was adopted, conjointly with endeavours to draw Philip to the side of England, and the sending of Sir Nicholas Throgmorton to France to remonstrate with the King.[1] The occasion given for this alarm is stated in Cecil's diary as follows: "January 16th, 1559. The Dolphin of France and his wife Queen of Scotts, did, by style of King and Queen of Scotland, England, and Ireland, graunt unto the Lord Fleming certain things."

Throgmorton arrived in Paris on the 23rd May, and on the 7th June wrote to Cecil that the Guises and Mary Stuart were bribing and pensioning Englishmen there, and that Cardinal Lorraine was busy intriguing for the sending of a force to Scotland, and for promoting his niece's claim to the English crown. He was "inquisitive to know of such Englishmen as he hath offered to interteigne, how many shippes the Queen's Majesty hath in redeness, and whether the same be layed up in dock at Gillingham, and how many of them be on the narrow seas, and whether the new great ships be already made and furnished with takling and ordnance."[2] On the 21st of the same month the news was

[1] Strype.

[2] A great impetus had been given to the building of warships on the accession of Elizabeth, and a programme of naval construction was presented, providing for the building of twenty-eight ships during the ensuing five years; an enormous increase when it is considered that the whole navy when Mary died consisted of only twenty-two sail. The first measure of Elizabeth was to turn a large number of the merchantmen, which had been built under subsidy, into warships. These were probably the ships referred to by

still more alarming. Throgmorton informed Cecil that a suggestion had been made to him for a marriage between Queen Elizabeth and Guise's brother, the Duke de Nemours, to which he had replied that he could not say anything about it unless the King of France or his Council officially mentioned it. Throgmorton now heard that Constable Montmorenci had reproached Nemours for making such a suggestion, "adding further these words, 'What! do yow not know that the Queen Dauphin hath right and title to England.'"[1] They only waited for an opportunity, said Throgmorton, to say, "Have at you." Great preparations were being made in Paris for the celebration of the peace with Spain, and the betrothal of the King's daughter to King Philip by proxy, and watchful Throgmorton soon discovered that on all escutcheons, banners, and trophies in which the Dauphin's and his wife's arms were represented, the arms of England were quartered, and almost daily thereafter in his letters to Cecil the Ambassador sounds the alarm. Cecil himself in his diary thus marks the progress of events, 28th June 1559: "the justs at Paris, wherein the King-Dolphin's two heralds were apparelled with the arms of England."[2] On the 29th June, at the great tournament to celebrate his child's betrothal to Philip, Henry II. was accidentally thrust in the eye by Montgomerie, and in a moment the political crisis became acute.

Mary Stuart was now Queen Consort of France. Her clever, ambitious uncles, Guise and the Cardinal, were practically rulers of France, and she herself, as Throgmorton says, "took everything upon her," and according to Cecil's diary (16th July), "the ushers going

Cardinal Lorraine. On the 3rd July, shortly afterwards, the Queen was present at the launch of a fine new warship at Woolwich, which she christened the *Elizabeth*.

[1] State Papers, Foreign; *in extenso* in Forbes.

[2] See also Throgmorton to Cecil, 1st July. *Ibid.*

before the Queen of Scotts (now French Queen) to Chappell cry, 'Place pour la Reine d'Angleterre.'" As soon as the pretensions of Mary were known, Cecil's counter move was to send help to the reform party in Scotland, and to revive the talk of a marriage between Elizabeth and the Earl of Arran, the heir-apparent to the Scottish crown. Arran was in France; and on the first suspicion against him of intriguing with the English, the King had ordered his capture, dead or alive. Randolph and Killigrew were successively sent by Cecil to Throgmorton with orders to aid the Earl, and, at any risk, smuggle him to England.[1] In disguise he was conveyed by Randolph to Zurich, and thence to England, and subsequently into Scotland,[2] to head the Protestant party against the French, from his father's castles of Hamilton and Dumbarton. Whilst Arran was in hiding in England, Cecil was apparently the only minister who saw him, and when he left, it was with full instructions and pecuniary help from the Secretary. Cecil was a man of peace; but the main point of his policy was the keeping of the French out of Flanders and Scotland. Now that Guise ambition openly struck at England through the northern kingdom active measures were needed, and they were taken.

As usual, Cecil's report on the whole question[3] to the Queen judiciously summed up all the possibilities. The document sets forth the desirability of an enduring peace between Scotland and England, and the impossibility of it whilst the former country is governed by a foreign nation like the French in the absence of its native sovereign; that the land should be "freed from idolatry like as England"; and that the nobility should be

[1] The Queen to Throgmorton, 17th and 19th July (State Papers, Foreign).
[2] Sadler to Cecil, 16th September 1559 (Sadler Papers, vol. i.).
[3] Printed *in extenso* in Sadler Papers, vol. i.

banded together with the next heir to the crown (Arran) to remedy all abuses. "If the Queen (Mary) shall be unwilling to this, as is likely, . . . then it is apparent that Almighty God is pleased to transfer from her the rule of the kingdom for the weale of it. And in this time great circumspection is to be used to avoid the deceits and trumperies of the French." Sir William's decision, after infinite discussion, is that the cheapest and only possible way will be at once to send strong reinforcements to the Scottish reformers, and at the same time that Sadler and Crofts on the Border should be sleepless, as they were, in their efforts in favour of the Protestant Scots.

There was no matter which concerned Cecil so much as this, as will be seen by his many interesting letters about it to Sir Ralph Sadler in the Sadler Papers. He had gone to Burghley in September 1559, and thence wrote to Sadler his anxiety to hear of Arran's[1] safe arrival in Scotland. "Th'erle of Arrayn borrowed of me at his being at London 200 crowns, which he promised should be paid to you, Mr. Sadler, for me. After some tyme passed, I praye you aske it of hym." The next day Cecil wrote that he had ordered Sadler "to lende the Protestants money, as of your selve, taking secretly the bonds of them to rendre the same; so as the Quene should not be partie thereto." Thenceforward money was secretly sent in plenty by Sir William to maintain the Scottish reformers who were besieging Leith, but Knox and the rigid Calvinists, with their republican and anti-feminine ideas, were hated by the Queen, and made matters difficult. "Knox's name," says Cecil, "is the most odious here. I wish no mention of it hither." "Surely I like not Knox's audacitie. . . . His writings do no good here, and therefore I do rather suppress them."[2]

[1] Arran travelled as a Frenchman under the name of De Beaufort.

[2] Sadler Papers, vol. i.

But it became evident that the Lords of the Congregation would be unable much longer to hold their own without powerful armed assistance from England. This would of course mean a renewal of the war with France, and before it could be undertaken it was necessary to make quite sure of the attitude of Philip, who was about to marry the French Princess. On this occasion, for the first time, Cecil was met and hampered in his action by a counter intrigue within the English court, such as for the next twenty years continually faced him.

When the Queen rode through the city from the Charterhouse to the Tower on her white jennet, she was followed closely by a handsome young man of her own age, who attracted general attention. She had appointed Lord Robert Dudley, the son of Cecil's old patron, Northumberland, Master of the Horse at Hatfield on the day that Mary died. In less than six months the tongue of scandal was busy with the doings of the Queen and her favourite, and the Spanish agents were calculating the chances of his being made an instrument for their ends. Gradually the English competitors for the Queen's hand sank into the background, whilst Dudley, a married man, grew in favour daily.[1] He was made a Knight of the Garter, to the openly expressed annoyance of other older and worthier nobles; money grants and favours of all sorts were showered upon him, and the Queen would hardly let him out of her sight. So long as the talk of the

[1] The scandalous gossip sent by all the foreign agents in England, especially by Feria and his successor, caused much heartburning. Challoner had been sent to the Emperor in connection with the Archduke's match, and in the Imperial court found scandal rife about his mistress and Lord Robert. He writes to Cecil a cautious, confidential letter (6th December 1559), saying that "folks there are broad-mouthed" about it. Of course, he says, it is a false slander; "but a Princess cannot be too wary what countenance of familiar demonstration she maketh more to one than another. No man's service in the realm is worthy the entertaining with such a tale of obloquy" (Hatfield Papers, part i.).

match with the Archduke Charles only dragged on its interminable length, Dudley was mildly approving and claiming rewards and bribes from the Spaniards in consequence; for he knew perfectly well that the negotiation was a feint, and that the religious obstacles were unsurmountable. But when, as has been seen, national interests led Cecil to play his master-move and checkmate Mary Stuart and the French connection in Scotland with Arran and the English marriage, Dudley saw that the affair was serious, and at once set about frustrating Cecil's national policy for his personal advantage. In order to obstruct the marriage with Arran, the first step was for Dudley to profess himself hotly in favour of the Austrian match.

His sister, Lady Sidney, was sent to the Bishop of Aquila, with the assurance that the Queen would consent to marry the Archduke at once if she were asked (September 1559). Dudley and Parry both came and assured the Bishop of their devotion, body and soul, to Spanish interests.[1] There was, they said, a plot to kill the Queen, and she had now made up her mind to concede the religious points at issue and marry the Archduke at once. The Queen herself avoided going so far as that in words, but by looks and hints she confirmed what Lady Sidney and Dudley had said. Between them they hoodwinked the Churchman, and he urged upon Philip and the Emperor the coming of the bridegroom. After his long talk at Whitehall with the Queen at the end of September, the Bishop saw Cecil, who by this time was fully aware of what was going on, and adroitly turned it to the advantage of his policy. War with the French in Scotland was practically adopted, if Philip could be depended upon to stand aloof. When, accordingly, the Bishop approached Cecil, the latter, although he avoided pledging himself to the Queen's marrying the Archduke, spoke sympathetic-

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.

ally about it. But his tone was different from Dudley's. "I saw," says the Bishop, "that he was beating about the bush, and begged that we might speak plainly to one another. I was not blind or deaf, and could easily perceive that the Queen was not taking this step to refuse her consent after all. He swore he did not know, and could not assure me." But then Cecil shot *his* bolt. The French, he said, were striving to impede the Archduke's match, and had offered great things to the Swedes if they could bring about the marriage of Elizabeth with the Prince of Sweden. "They (the English) well understood that this was only to alienate the Queen from her connection and friendship with Philip, and thus to enable the French to invade this country more easily."[1] Cecil then consented, but vaguely, to help forward "our affair," and was promised all Philip's favour if he did so. All Cecil asked for and wanted was an assurance of the help or neutrality of Spain, in the event of a French invasion, and this he unhesitatingly got—"if the Queen will marry the Archduke," a condition which Cecil, at least, must have known would not be fulfilled.

For the next week or two the Queen surpassed herself in vivacity, in pretended anticipation of the coming of her Imperial lover. She became outwardly more Catholic than ever. Candles and crucifixes were again put up on the altars of her chapels, priests wore their vestments, and the Spanish Bishop was in the best of spirits. All this was going too far for Cecil, and was forcing his hand. He wanted to ensure Philip's countenance by arousing jealousy of the French, whilst keeping the Archduke's marriage gently simmering. But if Dudley and the Queen carried it too far, it would either end in mortally offending Philip, or in introducing a strong Catholic influence in England,

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.

which would have been the end of Cecil as a minister. Feria, in Flanders, saw this clearly enough, and wrote to the Bishop to tell Dudley that Cecil would really be against the Archduke's business.[1] Dudley's intrigue to prevent the Scottish match, not only hampered Cecil, but set the whole court by the ears. The Duke of Norfolk and the thorough-going Spanish Catholic party formed a plot to kill Dudley, as they knew he was not sincere, and would prevent the marriage with the Archduke, perhaps, at the last moment; whilst Cecil's own Protestant friends, Bedford especially, who did not understand his cautious manner of dealing with difficulties, quarrelled with him about his apparent acquiescence in fresh Popish innovations.

Dudley's bubble soon burst of itself. The Emperor, not under the sway of Elizabeth's charm, was cool. The Bishop, as a feeler, fostered the idea that the Archduke was already on the way, and then the Queen, Dudley, and Lady Sidney took fright and began to cry off; and the Bishop saw he had been deceived (November 1559). But Arran's suit had still to be combated, and Dudley warmly took up the Swedish match; whilst the gossips whispered that he had decided to poison his wife, and marry the Queen himself. Matters had reached this stage, when the Bishop's agents began plotting with the Duke of Norfolk for the open coming of the Archduke, his marriage with Catharine Grey, and the murder of Elizabeth and Dudley; but this required bolder hands than Norfolk or Philip, and nothing came of it but open quarrels between Dudley and those who he knew were planning his ruin. Gradually prudent Cecil worked the Archduke's negotiations back again into the stage in which they had been when Dudley interfered. The Bishop was

[1] Feria to the Bishop of Aquila, 1st October 1559 (Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.).

courted, an envoy was sent to Vienna, care was taken to keep alive Philip's jealousy of the French—more than ever to be feared by the Spanish King, now that his own Netherlands were seething with disaffection; and then, at last, Cecil was able to accede to the prayer of the Scottish reformers,[1] and send an English force to their aid.

On the 23rd December 1559, Cecil could write to Sadler, saying that the Duke of Norfolk and Lord Grey were on their way north to take command of the army. "Our shippes be on the sea, God spede them! William Winter is appointed, as he commeth nigh, to learn of you the state of the French navy within the Firth. And it is thought good that ye should cause some small vessell to goo to hym with your intelligence before he come very nigh that towne, lest by tarryeng for your answer his voyage be hindered. The French are much amased at this our sodden going to sea, so as the Marq d'Elbœuf being come to Callise is retorned to Parriss in great hast. We lack intelligence from you and be ignorant of what ye do in Scotland. We be afrayd of the loss of Edinburgh Castle. God gyve ye both good night, for I am almost a slepe. At Westminster, hora 12ª nocte 23 Dec. 1559."[2]

[1] The original of the address of the Lords of the Congregation to Elizabeth will be found in the Cotton MSS., Caligula B x. (printed by Burnet). In November the famous William Maitland of Lethington was sent by the Lords to England for the purpose of pressing the cause of the Scottish reformers. He was secretly received by Sir James Crofts in the castle of Berwick, and there, by Cecil's instructions, Crofts gave him a draft written by Cecil of the best form in which to make his representation to the English Queen and Council. This is a good example of Cecil's foresight and thoroughness. He knew that Dudley and other French partisans would oppose in the Council the sending of an army to Scotland, and in order to strengthen Maitland's hands and avoid the introduction of anything upon which his opponent could seize, he himself drafted the address of the Scottish Protestants to the Queen and Council. It is needless to say that Maitland adopted his suggestions. The original Scotch draft is in the Cotton MSS., Caligula B ix., and extracts of it have been printed by Dr. Robertson and Dr. Nares. See also Sadler Papers, vol. i. p. 602.

[2] Sadler State Papers, vol. i.

The fleet of thirty-two sail, with 8000 infantry and 2000 cavalry, sailed up the Forth exactly a month after this letter was written, to the dismay of the French and the Queen Regent, who shortly afterwards learnt that Elbœuf and his army had been storm-beaten back to France. The French and Catholic Scots were now cooped up in Leith, with no possibility of receiving aid from France; whilst the English on the Border, and the Lords of the Congregation, were organising a strong land force to invade Scotland.

There was nothing more to be dreaded by Philip—as Cecil well knew—than a war between England and France for the cause of the Scottish Protestants. The Spanish alliance with France had aroused the distrust of the powerful reform party in the latter country; and on the accession of Francis II. and the Guises to power, the Queen-mother, Catharine de Medici, whose chance had at last come after years of insult and neglect, at once threw her influence into the scale of their opponents, the Montmorencis and the reformers. Throgmorton had been sent to France to form a union between the Protestant and anti-Guisan elements in France and Elizabeth, and in this he had been entirely successful, to the unfeigned dismay of Philip and his agents.[1] This combination of Protestants in England, Scotland, and France, and probably also in Germany, was a most threatening one for Philip's objects, especially in view of the condition of his own Netherlands; and yet his hands were tied. He dared not raise a hand to make French Mary Stuart Queen of Great Britain, although the triumph of reform in Scotland and this combination of Protestants struck at the very root of his objects and his policy. To the cautious planning of Cecil almost exclusively was owing the fact that in one year Philip

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i. 121.

had been disarmed, and rendered impotent to injure a Protestant England. The Spanish Bishop's only remedy for it all was to plot with the extreme English Catholics to kill Elizabeth, Dudley, and Cecil, and place Catharine Grey or Darnley on the throne under Spanish tutelage; and he conspired ceaselessly with that object. But his master knew better than he. The French, he was aware, would fight to prevent such a result, as well as the English, and neither he nor his coffers were in a mood for fighting them then; so he had to stoop to peaceful diplomacy, and tried to beat Cecil at his own game. The Secretary had continued to answer firmly all the Bishop's remonstrances and veiled threats, for he knew Philip could not move; and when it was decided to send a special Flemish envoy to England to dissuade the Queen from aiding the Scottish Protestants, the Bishop almost scornfully told Feria that, if talking had been of any good, he would have done it already. "They would do more harm than good if they were only coming to talk, for the English Catholics expect much more than that." "Cecil," he says, "is the heart of the business, and is determined to carry it through, until they are ruined, as they will be."[1] In the meanwhile (April 1560) the siege of Leith went on, notwithstanding the attempts of the French to settle terms of peace in London. Elizabeth would have nothing to do with any peace that left a French man-at-arms in Scotland.

Philip's Flemish envoy, De Glajon, arrived in London on the 5th April 1560, and was very coolly received by Elizabeth.[2] In Philip's name he exhorted her to abstain from helping the Scottish rebels, and then threatened that

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.

[2] The drafts of De Glajon's letters to the Duchess of Parma, describing his mission to England, are in B. M. Add. MSS. 28,173*a*, printed in Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.

if she did not come to terms with the French, Spanish troops would be sent to reinforce the latter. She was dignified, but alarmed at this, and sent Cecil on the following day to discuss the question with De Glajon.[1] After a conference, lasting five hours, in which Cecil recited all the English complaints against France, and pointed out the danger to Philip that would ensue upon the French becoming masters of Scotland, he positively assured the envoy that the English troops would not be withdrawn from Scotland until their objects were attained. The French Ambassador tried hard to draw Philip's envoy into a joint hostile protest[2] to Elizabeth; but the Spaniards knew that their master really did not mean to fight, and declined to compromise him. They, indeed, assured Cecil privately, that if Philip helped the French, it would only be in the interests of Elizabeth herself.

Through all the negotiation Cecil's management was most masterly. He had taken Philip's measure now, and knew the powerless position in which English diplomacy, aided by circumstances, had placed him. The Guises had taken his measure too. As week followed week, and hope of help from him disappeared, they saw that they must make such terms as they might with Elizabeth. The French in Leith were heroically holding out, though starving and hopeless; no reinforcements could be sent from France, for England

[1] Although I can find no hint of such a thing in De Glajon's letters to the Duchess of Parma, an entry in Cecil's diary seems to prove that Philip's jealousy of France was now so keen as to have led him secretly to approve of the English attack in Scotland. The entry in Cecil's own hand runs: "April 10, M. de Glason came and joined with the Bishop of Aquila to move the revocation of the army out of Scotland, *but Glason privately to my Lord Admiral and me the Secretary counselled us to the contrary.*" There is in the Record Office (printed *in extenso* by Forbes) a long Latin document in Cecil's hand, being his reply or speech to the official representations of De Glajon and the Bishop of Aquila.

[2] The French protest is printed by Forbes.

held the sea, and the Queen-mother and the reform party would give no help to purely Guisan objects. So at last, in May, Monluc, the Bishop of Valence, came humbly to London and sued Elizabeth for peace, and Cecil and Wotton, with Sir Henry Percy, Sir Ralph Sadler, and Peter Carew, travelled to Scotland to meet the French commissioners and settle the terms. Cecil started on the 30th May, and at the different stages of his journey he wrote letters to Sir William Petre.[1] On the 31st he writes from Royston: "in no apparent doubt of health, yet by foulness of weather afraid to ride to Huntingdon till to-morrow." On the 2nd June his letter comes from his own house at Burghley, "rubbing on between health and sickness, yet my heart serveth me to get the mastery."

His energy, his command of detail, and his foresight are remarkably shown in these letters. He spurs Petre to do as evidently he himself would have done—to expedite everything necessary for the prosecution of the war, though peace was in prospect; "to quicken the Lord Treasurer for money," and so forth. From Stamford he went to Doncaster, Boroughbridge, Northallerton, Newcastle, and so to Scotland, always vigilant, observant, suggestive; but in nearly every letter expressing deep distrust of the French, whom he suspected of treachery at every point. When they met in Edinburgh his complaints are constant of their "cavilations" and hairsplitting. "They may contend, however, about a word," he says, "but I mean to have the victory." Before the negotiations commenced, the Queen Regent, Mary of Lorraine, died (11th June), and this, by perplexing the French, somewhat facilitated an arrangement. The most difficult point was the use of the English arms by Mary Stuart, and, on the 1st July,

[1] All in Hatfield Papers, part i.

Cecil wrote to the Queen that the negotiations had been broken off on that point alone. After this was written, but before it was despatched, Cecil proposed a "device,"[1] by the insertion of a "few fair words"; and an arrangement was the result, which stands a triumphant vindication of Cecil's policy.

The French troops were all to be withdrawn, Leith and Dunbar to be razed, Mary abandoned her claim to the English crown, and acknowledged Elizabeth; and, above all, Mary granted a constitution to her subjects, which well-nigh annihilated the prerogative of her throne. A Parliament was to be forthwith summoned, which should have the power to declare or veto war or peace; during the sovereign's absence the country was to be governed by a council of twelve persons to be chosen out of twenty-four elected by Parliament, seven of the twelve being chosen by the Queen, and five by Parliament; no foreigner was to hold any place of trust, nor was an ecclesiastic to control the revenues; a complete indemnity was given for all past acts, civil and ecclesiastical, and the question of religious toleration was to be finally decided by Parliament.

Thus the Scottish-French question, which had been a standing menace to England for centuries, was settled by the statesmanship of Cecil; and perhaps through the whole of his great career no achievement shows more clearly than this the consummate tact, patience, firmness, moderation, and foresight that characterised his policy. Less than two years before Eng-

[1] The "device" proposed by Cecil would appear to have been the clause that if the article relative to the abandonment of the royal arms of England by Mary and her husband was rejected by them, the point was to be submitted to the arbitration of the King of Spain. Cecil's own draft of the clause is at Hatfield (Papers, part i.). There is no doubt that Cecil was safe in making this condition, as he must have known from his interview with De Glajon what Philip's real sentiments were.

land under the patronage of Philip was forced to accept a humiliating peace from France, and Spanish and French agents had intrigued against each other as to which of their two sovereigns should use prostrate, exhausted England for his own objects. In two short years of dexterous statesmanship England had turned the tables. Not only had she with comparative ease effected a vast domestic revolution, but she was conscious of the fact that both of the great Continental rivals were impotent to injure her, out of jealousy of each other, whilst her own power for offence and defence had enormously increased, and the knitting together of the reformers throughout Europe had placed her at the head of a confederacy which she could use as a balance against her enemies.

Her powers for offence & defence had enormously increased.

CHAPTER V

1560–1561.

THE results achieved in so short a time after Elizabeth's accession were due in a large measure to the moderation and prudence of Cecil's methods. The changes which had been made attacked many interests, and ran counter to many prejudices; and the policy of Elizabeth in retaining most of her sister's Councillors had surrounded her with men who still clung to the old faith and the traditions of the past. From the first the Spanish and French Ambassadors had begun to bribe the Councillors, and had respectively formed their parties amongst those who immediately surrounded the Queen. Elizabeth herself was fickle and unstable, yet obstinate in the opinion of the moment. Her vanity often led her into false and dangerous positions, and already scandal was busy with her doings. She was easily swayed by the opinions of others, yet fiercely resented any attempt at dictation. Her feelings, moreover, towards the French were by no means so antagonistic as those of Cecil, and the cost of the war in Scotland had caused her great annoyance. It will be seen, therefore, that the task of her principal minister in carrying out with safety a consistent national policy was an extremely difficult one. More than once during the Scotch war the French-Guisan party in Elizabeth's court had, to Cecil's dismay, nearly persuaded the Queen to suspend hostilities, whilst Philip's paid agents in her Council were for ever whispering distrust of

Cecil and his religious reforms. Whilst the Howards, Arundel, Paget, Mason, and the rest of the Philipians —as the puritan Lord John Grey called them—were denouncing the minister for his Protestant measures, the hot zealots who had hurried back from Germany and Switzerland, dreaming of the violent establishment of an Anglican Church on the Genevan pattern, were discontented at the slowness and tentative character of the religious reforms adopted; and Cecil's own friends, like the Earl of Bedford, the Duchess of Suffolk, and the Lord Admiral Clinton, were often impatient at his moderation. To this must be added the unprincipled influence of Dudley, who was ready to swear allegiance to any cause, to serve his purpose of dominating the Queen, a purpose which was naturally opposed by Cecil as being dangerous to the national welfare. It will thus be seen that the patient, strong minister was surrounded by difficulties on every side; and but for the fact that none of his rivals were comparable with him in ability and energy, Cecil must have shared the usual fate of ministers, and have fallen before the attacks of his enemies.

He returned from Scotland at the end of July, after an absence of sixty-three days[1] and from a letter of the Lord Treasurer (Winchester) to him soon afterwards (24th August 1560), it is evident that his detractors had been at work in his absence.[2] The old Marquis loved to

[1] Cecil was paid during his absence £4 per diem—£252; and for postage with twenty-two horses from London to Edinburgh and back, £117.

[2] That this would be the case was foreseen before he started from London in May. Killigrew writes to Throgmorton (in France) on the day before Cecil's departure, "who (Cecil), for his country's sake, hath been contented to take the matter in hand. The worst hath been cast of his absens from hence by his frendes, but at length jugged (judged) for the best. . . . I know none love their country better; I wold the Quene's Majesty could love it so well" (Throgmorton Papers, *in extenso* in Forbes).

stand well with all men, but his tendencies we know now to have been "Philipian," and he wrote to the Secretary: "In the meantime all good Councillors shall have labor and dolor without reward; wherein your part is most of all mens; for your charge and paynes be farre above all oder mens, and your thanks and rewards least and worst considered, and specially for that you spend wholly of yourself, without your ordinary fee, land, patent, gift, or ony thing, which must nedes discomfort you. And yett when your counsell is most for her Majesties honour and profitt, the same hath got hinderance by her weke creditt of you, and by back councells; and so long as that matter shall continue it must needs be dangerous service and unthankful."

Less than three weeks after this letter was written, the Bishop of Aquila went to Greenwich about the Austrian match, which still dragged on, when, to his surprise, the Queen told him flatly she had altered her mind, and would not marry at all. The Bishop then sought out Cecil, who, he knew, was now in semi-disgrace, owing to the efforts of Dudley in his absence. The Secretary was not in the habit of wearing his heart upon his sleeve, and if he did so on this occasion to Philip's minister, it may be concluded that it was from motives of policy, which are not very far to seek. "After exacting many pledges of strict secrecy, he said that the Queen was conducting herself in such a way that he thought of retiring. He said it was a bad sailor who did not enter port if he could when he saw a storm coming on, and he clearly foresaw the ruin of the realm through Robert's intimacy with the Queen, who surrendered all affairs to him and meant to marry him. He said he did not know how the country put up with it, and he should ask leave to go home, though he thought they would cast him into the Tower first. He

ended by begging me in God's name to point out to the Queen the effect of her misconduct, and persuade her not to abandon business entirely, but to look to her realm; and then he repeated to me twice over that Lord Robert would be better in Paradise than here."[1] After this Cecil told the Ambassador that Dudley "was thinking of killing his wife," which on the following day the Queen partly confirmed by mentioning to the Bishop that she was "dead or nearly so." The Bishop's comment upon this is, that "Cecil's disgrace must have great effect, as he has many companions in discontent, especially the Duke of Norfolk. . . . Their quarrels cannot injure public business, as nobody worse than Cecil can be at the head of affairs, but the outcome of it all might be the imprisonment of the Queen, and the proclamation of the Earl of Huntingdon[2] as King. He is a great heretic, and the French forces might be used for him. Cecil says he is the real heir of England, and all the heretics want him. I do not like Cecil's great friendship with the Bishop of Valence."

Shortly after this was written, the tragic fate of Amy Robsart was announced. For months past there had been rumours of the intention of Dudley to have his wife killed, in order that he might marry the Queen, and as the date of Cecil's conversation with the Bishop is not quite certain, it is possible that he may have spoken with the knowledge that she was already dead. In any

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.

[2] The twentieth Earl of Huntingdon (Hastings) was the son of Catharine Pole by the nineteenth Earl. He was consequently the grandson of Henry, Lord Montacute, the eldest of the Poles, and great-great-grandson of George Plantagenet, Duke of Clarence, the younger brother of Edward IV. His claim to the crown could only be made good by the failure or invalidation of those of all the descendants of Henry VII. and Elizabeth of York, daughter of Edward IV.

case, however, it is certain that, at this time, Cecil feared that the Queen's passion for Dudley would bring about the downfall of the edifice he had so laboriously built, and he sought if possible to lay the foundation for his future action. The friendship with the Guisan Bishop, Monluc, was clearly a feint, as was also the idea that the French would help Huntingdon to the detriment of their own Queen Mary Stuart, but it would serve to arouse the jealousy of the Spaniards, and would incline them to Cecil's side to prevent it. Dudley had in Cecil's absence gained most of the advanced Protestant party to his side by his open championship of their ideas, and the Secretary, finding himself distrusted by his friends, was obliged to endeavour to discredit Dudley, to gain the sympathy of the Spanish Bishop, and, through him, of the "Philipians," who were already opposed to Dudley as an upstart and a friend of France. Regarded in this light, Cecil's unwonted frankness to the Spanish Ambassador is intelligible enough. If things went well with the Queen, the "Philipians" could keep him in office, and if disaster befell her, he dissociated himself from her before the catastrophe, and made common cause with the party which in such case would certainly be uppermost.

The danger, however, soon blew over, for Amy Robsart's death caused so much scandal as to cover Dudley with obloquy, and render him powerless for a time, during which Cecil regained his influence. How completely he did so is seen in Dudley's enigmatical letter to him at the time when he was first feeling the effect of the odium of his wife's death. The real meaning of the letter is not intelligible. Dudley had retired from court, probably to Wanstead, and had been visited by Cecil, who was having close inquiry made into the death of Lady Robert. He appears to have made some friendly promise to Dudley, who is effusively grateful.

"The great frendshipp you have shewyd towards me I shall not forgett. I pray you lett me hear from you what you think best for me to doe; if you doubt, I pray you ask the question (of the Queen?), for the sooner you can advyse me the more I shall thank you. I am sorry so sodden a chaunce shuld brede me so great a change, for methinks I am here all this while as it were in a dream."[1] Dudley's retirement and pretended disgrace, to save appearances, did not last long; and when he came back to court he found Cecil in full favour again.[2] Whilst Lord Robert was away Cecil had extracted a positive assurance from the Queen direct, that she would not marry Dudley. Cecil had thereupon made another attempt to revive the Archduke's negotiation,[3] and at the same time had sounded the Spanish Ambassador about marrying Catharine Grey to a nominee of Philip; this being a prudent attempt to obtain a second connecting link with Spain, now that the negotiations with the Archduke had been worn nearly threadbare.

But the Spanish-Austrian family were not responsive. They had been fooled more than once, and were determined that Elizabeth should not lead them into a position compromising to their dignity; but it was necessary for those who had the welfare of England at heart to take some steps which should render Dudley's hopes unrealisable. The Protestant party in the Council, with Cecil's acquiescence, again brought up the proposal of the new King of Sweden, Eric XIV. He was an eager suitor, and had been trying to gain a hearing at intervals since before Mary's death; and in answer to private messages from England, intimated his inten-

[1] Hatfield Papers, *in extenso* in Haynes.

[2] Bedford writes to Throgmorton, 16th March 1561, "Cecil is now more than any other in special credit, and does all" (Foreign Calendar). The Spanish Ambassador says the same.

[3] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i. 177.

tion of coming himself to win his bride. The Protestants were overjoyed; for this would have been an ideal solution for them, especially now that the situation had been unexpectedly changed by the death of the young King of France, Mary Stuart's husband (5th December 1560). This event, which took away much of the Guises' power, and weakened Mary's connection with France, now governed by her mother-in-law, Catharine de Medici, who hated her, banished in a large measure Philip's dread of her accession to the English throne; and the Catholics in England thought they saw daylight ahead, if the Queen died childless.

It was natural, therefore, that the Protestants should make a counter move, and actively revive the idea of the Swedish match. It was equally to be expected that when Dudley thus found himself without any party at all but his personal friends, he should seek support in a fresh quarter. He was without shame, scruple, or conscience. He had betrayed, or was ready to betray, every person or cause that trusted him; his sole object was to force or cajole the Queen into marrying him, and he grasped at any aid towards it. In January 1561 his brother-in-law, Sir Henry Sidney, a Catholic, and a friend of Spain, came to the Bishop of Aquila, and assured him that Dudley was innocent of his wife's death, though public opinion was universally against him. Sidney then went on to say that, as Elizabeth's desire to marry Dudley was evident, it was surprising that the Spanish party had not helped him in his object, and thus gained his gratitude, in return for which "he would hereafter serve and obey your Majesty like one of your own vassals." The Bishop was not eager, for he had been tricked before when the Sidneys were the intermediaries; but when Sidney promised that if Dudley were aided to marry the Queen, he would restore the Catholic religion in England, the

Churchman listened. He could be no party, of course, he said, to a bargain about religion; but if Dudley really wished to repent in this way, he should be delighted. The Queen acquiesced in the intrigue, and eagerly listened to the Spaniard's advocacy of Dudley's suit, though doubtless she did not know that her English suitor had promised, in the event of his marriage, to hand over the whole government to the King of Spain, and fully restore the Catholic faith.[1]

As some earnest of the Queen's and Dudley's chastened hearts, the Bishop had urged that English plenipotentiaries should be sent to the Council of Trent, and the English bishops released who were imprisoned for refusing the oath of supremacy. Dudley was willing to promise that or anything else; but in so important a matter of State as the recognition of the Pope's Council, the co-operation of Cecil was needed. He was, of course, opposed to Dudley's suit, but had not interfered openly to stop these negotiations, the Bishop says, in consequence of his having been bribed by the grant of some emoluments enjoyed by Parry, who had recently died, but more probably because he may really have been at the bottom of these negotiations, and he knew that he could checkmate Dudley more effectually, if necessary, at a later stage.[2] As we have seen, his opposition to strong forces was rarely direct. He knew in this case that the Queen would resent open thwarting from him; and that it would also have the effect of offending the Catholics, and renewing the quarrel with Dudley and

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.

[2] Cecil appears at this time to have satisfied himself that the Queen did not mean to marry Dudley. He writes to Throgmorton, 4th April, saying that the Queen was making the Swedish envoy Guldenstern very welcome. "I see no small declensions from former dealings (*i.e.* with Dudley); at least I find in her Majesty by divers speeches a determination not to marry one of her subjects" (State Papers, Foreign).

his friends. So when he was consulted, he feigned to welcome the project of sending English representatives to the Council of Trent, and at once proceeded to kill it with kindness.

The situation in England was an extremely critical one. Much public dissatisfaction existed at the Queen's questionable behaviour, and the Catholics, especially, were greatly disturbed in consequence of the attitude of Mary Stuart. The treaty of Edinburgh, the result of so much thought and labour, had not been ratified by Mary and her husband when the latter died; and in answer to requests on the part of the English Government, through Throgmorton and Sir Peter Mewtys, that she would ratify it, Mary declined until she had by her side some of her Scottish Councillors. The Scottish Parliament had been summoned in accordance with the treaty, before the latter had been accepted by the sovereign, and consequently her refusal to ratify the treaty raised a host of difficulties on all sides. It was felt universally that Mary might well expect now the countenance of Philip in her pretensions to the English crown, whilst all that was Catholic in France looked to her uncles, the Guises, as leaders. The combination was too strong for Cecil to face directly, in addition to the Queen's caprice and the factions of the English court, and his method of dealing with the matter was characteristically prudent. During the progress of Dudley's negotiations with the Spaniard to bring back England to Catholicism, the puritan Earl of Bedford was sent to France, ostensibly to ask Mary again to ratify the treaty of Edinburgh, and to condole with her for the loss of her husband; but his real object was to bring about an understanding with the Duke of Vendôme,[1] Coligny, and the French Protestants.

[1] Anthony de Bourbon, titular King-Consort of Navarre, husband of Jeanne d'Albret, and father of Henry IV. of France.

At the same time Randolph was entrusted with an important message to the Protestant nobles of Scotland. He was to tell them that the Protestant princes of Germany were firmly united; that the French reformers were now the stronger party; that the Queen of England would stand by the Scots; and to exhort them to be true to the Protestant faith, no matter what efforts might be made to move them. Randolph was also to approach even Scottish Catholics, and point out what a favourable opportunity now occurred, the Queen of Scots being free of her French connection, to form a close union between England and Scotland.[1]

But whilst this seed was germinating it was necessary for Cecil to dally with the Catholics and "Philipians" in England. He accordingly went (March 1561) to the Spanish Ambassador with a message—secretly purporting to come from the Queen, but ostensibly from himself—to the effect that it would be a great favour to the Queen "and a help to this business" if Philip would write her a letter as soon as possible, "urging her, in the interests of her country, to marry at once; and, as she is disinclined to marry a foreigner, he advises her to choose one of her own subjects, who, in such case, would receive Philip's friendship and support." Cecil affected to urge this course very warmly upon the Bishop, who, however, was wary, and insisted upon knowing definitely whether the Queen herself had sent the message. The only answer that Cecil would give was that it was not fair to drive a modest maiden like the Queen up in a corner, and make her personally responsible for steps leading to her own marriage. But he told the Bishop that the reason Philip's letter was necessary, was that the Queen should submit it to a packed deputation of both Houses of Parliament, so that her marriage with Dudley might, in

[1] Hatfield Papers, part i.

appearance, have the sanction of her people. No course so likely as this to frustrate the match could have been devised, as Dudley himself saw, for he fell ill of vexation; but, as the Bishop says, he was faint-hearted, and lacked ability and courage to break through the snares that Cecil had spread for him. The Bishop divined the plan very soon. "The deputation is being arranged," he says; "to suit him and the heretics, who have entire control of the Queen. . . . She dares not go against Cecil's advice, because she thinks that both sides would then rise up against her.[1]

Cecil, "who," he says, "is entirely pledged to these unhappy heresies, and is the leader of the business," tried on more than one occasion to draw the Spanish Bishop into religious controversy—the Bishop thought, with the object of discovering whether Dudley or the Queen had gone further in their pledges than he had been told. He suggested that the Pope should send theologians to England to discuss religion with English divines, but the Bishop would not hear of it. Then he proposed that the Bishop himself should secretly meet the Archbishop of Canterbury (Parker) and endeavour to bring about a religious *modus vivendi;* to which the Spaniard replied, that if they were sincere in their desire to agree, they had better begin with the main points of difference, instead of discussing secondary points of dogma.[1]

Cecil assured him that the Queen would send representatives to the Pope's Council, on condition that it was held in a place satisfactory to other princes; that the Pope or his legate should preside over the Council, not so as to infer that he was the ruler of it, but only the president of its deliberations; that questions of faith might be decided by Holy Scripture, the consensus of divines,

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, i.

and the decisions of early councils; that the English bishops should be recognised as equals of the rest; and other conditions of the same sort, which obviously frustrated—as they were meant to do—all hope of the religious compact, upon which Dudley's hopes were ostensibly built. In the court, we are told, Cecil went about saying that the Queen wished to send her envoys to the Council, but that a Council could not judge questions of faith, nor could the Pope, as of right, claim to preside.[1] On the one hand, he reprehended the Bishop of Winchester (Horn) for preaching against the authority of the Councils, and caused a meeting of bishops to be called at Lambeth, to settle a profession of faith to be sent to the Council; whilst, on the other, he told the Spaniard that if when the Pope wrote to the Queen he did not give her her full titles of Queen of England and Defender of the Faith, she would not receive his letters. Well might Quadra say: "I do not know what to think of it all: these people are in such a confusion that they confound me as well. Cecil is a very great heretic, but he is neither foolish nor false, and he professes to treat me very frankly. He has conceded to me these three points, which I consider of the utmost importance, however much he may twist them to the other side." Whoever else may have been confused, we may be certain that Cecil knew what he was about, for he completely hoodwinked and conciliated the Spanish Bishop and the Catholics until his new combination was consolidated.[2] The English Catholics were more leniently treated; and the Queen and

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.

[2] Throgmorton, a zealous Protestant, who was in France, and, of course, not behind the scenes in London, appears to have been seriously alarmed, and to have thought that Cecil was really about to change his religion. He wrote (29th April) almost vehemently exhorting him not to ruin the country by doing so (Foreign Calendar).

court were almost inconveniently friendly with Quadra, who was obliged to whisper to his friends that it was all make-believe. He said more truly than he thought at the time. At the end of April, Cecil's arrangements were complete, and the mask could be dropped safely.

At the instance of Randolph the Scottish Lords of the Congregation had commissioned James Stuart, Mary's natural brother, afterwards Earl of Murray, who was already in English pay, to visit his sister in France, and influence her to return to Scotland pledged to the treaty of Edinburgh, and to place herself in the hands of the Protestant party. For the moment the Guises in France were in disgrace, and plotting for their own advancement, so that it suited them to appear to acquiesce in an arrangement which promised that their niece should take possession of her kingdom without disturbance. James Stuart, carefully coached by Throgmorton, went back to London with the assurance that all was well.[1] Mundt, in Germany, had drawn the league closer between England and the Princes; Bedford in France had completed a cordial arrangement with Vendôme, Coligny, and the Protestants; Philip's Netherlands were in seething

[1] When Throgmorton first heard that James Stuart was on his way to France he was in great alarm. He was sure that he would be bought over by Mary and the Catholic party, who intended to obtain for him a Cardinal's hat. Throgmorton thought that no prominent or powerful Scotsman should come to France for fear of his falling under the influence of the anti-English party. But Cecil saw young Stuart on his way and satisfied himself that he might be trusted; and when Stuart returned to Paris from Rheims on his way home, Throgmorton was almost extravagant in his praise of him, and regarded him as firmly wedded to English interests, as indeed he was. Mary, on the advice of Cardinal Lorraine, refused to ratify the treaty of Edinburgh until she arrived in Scotland; but she consented to hand over the government of her realm to James and his friends until her return. She promised to send after him patents under her great seal constituting him Regent, but this she failed to do. Nevertheless he went back to Scotland with practically a free hand, pending the Queen's arrival in her realm. (Foreign Calendar.)

discontent, his coffers were empty and he was in a death grapple with the Turk for the mastery of the Mediterranean. There was nothing for England to fear, therefore. Circumstances and Cecil's diplomacy had placed once more all the cards into his hands, and again he could go forward on a straight course.

The pretext for a change was given by the secret presence of a papal nuncio in Ireland. English Catholics were suddenly proceeded against all over the country for attending mass. Sir Edward Waldegrave and other ex-members of Mary's Council were thrown into the Tower; the Pope's legate, who was hurrying with all sorts of concessions, and an invitation to Elizabeth to send envoys to the Council of Trent, was refused admittance into England; and the old Bishop of Aquila found once more that Cecil had outwitted him. There were no more conciliatory religious discussions or amiable attentions; on the contrary, the Ambassador, to his intense indignation, was accused of taking part in plots against the Queen, and found himself slighted on all sides. A great outcry took place that a conspiracy of Catholics had been discovered to poison the Queen, the rumour in all probability being part of the general plan to weaken and discredit the Catholic party; and Cecil himself drew up a paper, still extant,[1] urging her Majesty not to place any apparel next her skin until it had been carefully examined, that no perfume should be inhaled by her which came from a stranger, that no food should be consumed by her unless it was dressed by her own cooks, that twice a week she should take some *contra pestum*, that the back doors of her apartments should be strictly guarded, and so forth. Whether Cecil was really apprehensive of danger to the Queen at the time is uncertain; but this general change of attitude towards

[1] Hatfield State Papers, *in extenso* in Haynes.

the Catholics in less than four months suspiciously coincided with the successful consolidation of the Protestants throughout Europe, and the paralysation for harm both of Spain and France in the matter of Mary Stuart.

How far Dudley was sincere in his approaches to the Catholics on this occasion may be doubted. He would have been willing, of course, to have paid any price—or rather have made his country pay any price—for his marriage with the Queen; but there are circumstances which tend to the belief that he and Cecil, for once, had joined their forces, Cecil probably promising his support to Dudley's suit in exchange for this clever "entertaining" of Spain and the Catholics until the Protestant coalition was formed. In any case, Dudley was in nowise cast down at the rupture of the negotiations, but remained on excellent terms with Cecil, and flirted with the Queen more furiously than ever. In the meanwhile the King of Sweden had made all preparations for visiting England. The extreme Protestant party had continued to encourage him during the time that the Queen, Cecil, and Dudley were lulling the Catholics; but now that the Catholic mask had been dropped, Eric's visit was very inconvenient to the Queen. Mary Stuart was a widow, and every court in Europe was intriguing for her marriage.[1] Elizabeth knew that if she was forced into a marriage with the King of Sweden, Mary would

[1] For months Throgmorton's spectre was that Mary might marry Philip's only son, Don Carlos, which, he pointed out to Cecil, would inevitably ruin England and Protestantism. It may be doubted whether Cardinal Lorraine had reached this point yet; though, as will be told, it was broached later from another quarter. It is more likely that at this time—the early summer of 1561—the Cardinal's view was to marry his niece to the Archduke Charles, Elizabeth's former suitor, which would have greatly strengthened the Catholics of Germany and the House of Lorraine. The English Catholics at the same time, at the instigation of the Countess of Lennox, were anxiously advocating a marriage between her son, Lord Darnley, and his cousin, Mary Stuart.

immediately be wedded to a nominee of Philip, for which object Cardinal Lorraine was already planning. Eric was therefore refused a passport into England;[1] the Lord Mayor was ordered to suppress the prints which had been scattered by the Protestants, representing Elizabeth and Eric XIV. together (July 1561),[2] and the embarrassment of the Swede's advances was postponed until a more convenient season.

The English Catholics were naturally losing heart. They had looked in vain for help from Philip ever since the Queen's accession. The war party in the Spanish King's councils had ceaselessly urged him to overturn Elizabeth and the "heretics" before their power was consolidated. Feria and his successor the Bishop had done their best to keep alive the hopes of Elizabeth's enemies in England; but as year followed year and leaden-footed Philip moved not the English Catholics began to cast their eyes elsewhere. Mary Stuart arrived in Scotland (19th August 1561) surrounded by her Lorraine kinsmen. Elizabeth now thoroughly distrusted her, for she saw that she was her match in dissimulation, at all events, and made some show of intercepting her on the voyage;[3] but her Scottish subjects of all faiths were ready to welcome the young half-foreign Queen from whom they hoped so much. The country was practically in a condition of anarchy; but the administration, such as it was, was in the hands of the reform party under Maitland and James Stuart. Although herself devoutly following the Catholic faith—to the disgust of the predominant party—the Queen soon after her arrival confirmed the free exercise of the Protestant worship, and for a time both she and her minis-

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.
[2] Hatfield Papers, part i.
[3] Throgmorton to Elizabeth, 26th July, in Cabala.

ters were popular. To the north, therefore, the English Catholic party now cast their eyes. Catharine Grey had recently contracted a doubtful marriage with the eldest son (Hertford) of the Protector Somerset, and was out of the question as a Catholic candidate; but Mary Stuart's claim to the English throne was in many respects better than that of Elizabeth herself. Lady Margaret Lennox, too, was busy in the north of England, where the population was mainly Catholic, plotting for the marriage of her son and the subsequent raising of the country in the interests of Mary and a Catholic England.

In the meanwhile Elizabeth was somewhat roughly demanding to know why Mary delayed the ratification of the treaty of Edinburgh, and jealously watching for any signs of matrimonial negotiations to her detriment. The Earl of Arran, Elizabeth's candidate for Mary Stuart's hand, was extremely unpopular with the Scottish people, and soon became impossible as a consort for the Queen; and the carefully laid plans of Elizabeth and Cecil in Scotland were seen to be at the mercy of a secret matrimonial intrigue, which might be sprung upon them at any moment. Maitland of Lethington, Mary's Secretary of State, ostensibly a Protestant, went to London[1] and saw Cecil in September, in the hope of arranging matters. He professed to be sanguine about the Arran marriage; but though bound to the English interest, he protested more than once on his return, in letters to Cecil, upon the pressure exerted upon his mistress to renounce her English birthright, and even begged the Secretary to furnish him with a draft of a reply for Mary to send which he thought might satisfy Elizabeth. Whilst Lord James, Maitland, and Cecil were trying to conciliate and calm matters, the zealot Knox and his like were clamour-

[1] For Maitland's interviews with the Queen, see Hayward (Camden Society).

ing for extreme measures and embittering spirits on both sides. Cecil in vain counselled Knox to be moderate; the reply[1] reproaches him for "swimming betwixt two waters," and throws all the blame for the troubles on moderate statesmen like Lord James and Lethington, "whose mistaken forbearance and gentleness" he denounces. The young Queen, he says, will never be of "our opinion, and in very deed her whole proceedings do declare that the Cardinal's lessons are so deeply imprinted on her heart, that they . . . are like to perish together. . . . In communication with her I espied such craft as I have not found in such age."

This opinion must only be accepted as that of a bitterly severe man on one whose position was as difficult as can well be conceived. English Catholics, Mary knew, now looked to her as their only hope. She was a daughter of kings, brought up in a deep school of statecraft, and was determined to resist the demanded renunciation of her birthright in England at the bidding of a rival. Her letter to Elizabeth (5th January 1562)[1] explains why she declined to ratify the treaty of Edinburgh, pathetically pleads that the clause in the treaty renouncing her rights to the English succession was agreed to without her authority, and she appeals to the generosity of so near a cousin not to make her a stranger to her own blood. She will, she says, make a new treaty on Elizabeth's own terms, if her rights to succeed, failing Elizabeth's issue, are not prejudiced. But on this point Elizabeth would never give way. As we have seen, it was the keynote of Cecil's policy all his life to secure England from the presence of a probable enemy on the Scottish border, and this question of Mary's claim to the English succession, especially with her marriage still undecided, touched the heart of the whole matter.

[1] Hatfield Papers, part. i.

It was evident, moreover, that at this juncture the great trial of arms between the Catholics and Protestants throughout Europe was at hand. The war of religion was already looming near in France and Flanders, papal emissaries had incited armed revolt in Ireland against the Queen's Protestant measures, and English Catholics were in a dangerous state of ferment.[1] It was therefore of the most vital interest, not only to England and Elizabeth, but to the reform party throughout Europe, that no advantage should be given in Scotland to vigilant enemies, who, by the control of that country, would have been enabled to ruin the acknowledged head of the Protestant confederacy. It is the fashion to accuse Elizabeth and Cecil of unprincipled rancour against Mary Stuart. Generosity and magnanimity, it may be conceded, were not conspicuous characteristics of either of them. But before judging too harshly, it should be considered that their lives, the freedom and independence of England, and the fate of the reformed religion depended almost inevitably upon the course of events in Scotland, and both Elizabeth and her minister would have been false to their trust if they had not availed themselves of all the means which circumstances and the feeling of the times placed in their hands to prevent Mary Stuart and her country from precipitating their downfall.

Cecil's position in London also was surrounded with difficulties. The Catholics, even those about the Queen,

[1] Lady Margaret, and the Earls of Westmoreland and Northumberland, with the Duke of Norfolk, were summoned to London, whilst the Earl of Arundel was obliged to absent himself from court (November 1561), and the students of the University were in a condition of revolt at the attempt to reform the worship in the college chapels. "The whole place," said the Mayor of Oxford, "was of the same opinion (*i.e.* Catholic), and there were not three houses in it that were not filled with papists," "whereat the Council were far from pleased, and told the Mayor to take care not to say such things elsewhere" (Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.).

were busy, and reports of plans for poisoning Elizabeth continued without cessation. Everything, great and small, had to be done by Cecil. "He has," writes the Bishop of Aquila, "absolutely taken possession of the Queen and Council, but he is so perplexed and unpopular that I do not know how he will be able to stand if there are any disturbances."[1] The Queen, moreover, fell ill: "she is falling away and is extremely thin, and the colour of a corpse." The sorely tried Secretary, bearing upon his shoulders everybody's burden, frequently sick himself,[2] but working early and late, endeavouring to keep a middle course whilst holding to his policy, naturally aroused no enthusiasm. Extreme men of all parties cavilled at his methods; only the Queen grew in her trust of him, for she at least understood, as perhaps no other person did, that he was almost the only person near her who was not bribed. The city and the trading classes, however, by this time had seen the good results of his commercial and fiscal policy. From the first days of the reign he had set about reforming the currency, and he enters in his diary for 29th May of this year (1561) a statement which shows that his labours at last bore fruit. "Base monies decried and fine silver coined," he writes; and in November a proclamation was issued that Spanish gold and silver money, which during the debasement of English coin had been a favourite form of currency, should no longer be allowed, but should be taken to the Queen's mint for exchange into English coin. "The Queen," grumbles the Spanish Ambassador, "makes a profit on it, as she did with the other money she called in." No doubt she did, but the new pure coinage

[1] Quadra to the King, 13th September 1561 (Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth).

[2] The Perpetual Calendar at Hatfield frequently mentions attacks of illness about this time, "fitts of ague," or gout, fever, and so on.

placed English merchants at an immense advantage in trading abroad, and they thanked Cecil for it.[1] "There hath," says Camden, "been better and purer money in England than was seen in two hundred years before, or hath been elsewhere in use throughout Europe." Nor was this all. Shipbuilding under subsidy had progressed very rapidly, and English commerce was penetrating into regions hitherto unapproached.[2] The Hawkinses had already shown the way to the West Coast of Africa, but the Portuguese had so far successfully resisted the establishment of a regular trade. English ships, however, now found their way down to Elmina, on the Gold Coast, with frequency distressing to the Portuguese; whilst English and Scotch privateers, and pirates who called themselves such, preyed almost unchecked upon Spanish and Flemish small craft about the Channel. Against both of these grievances the Spanish and Portuguese ministers complained often and bitterly. Throughout his life Cecil set his face against piracy in all its forms, as being inimical to legitimate trade, and at his instance five of the Queen's ships were fitted out (1561) for the purpose of suppressing the corsairs; but to the other complaint he turned a very different face.

A syndicate had been formed, in which Dudley, Wynter (Master of the Ordnance), Gonson (Controller of the Navy), Sir William Garrard, and probably the Queen herself, had shares, to send out a strong ex-

[1] At first the difficulty of obtaining the new coins caused some inconvenience, and several of Elizabeth's Councillors were in favour (1562) of a fresh debasement of the coinage. By Cecil's and Paget's efforts, however, this was avoided, as it was feared that such a measure would cause disturbance. For the first year or two the demand was so great for the new money that the supply was quite inadequate to the demand, but the people greatly resented the idea of a fresh debasement.

[2] As early as 1555, in the reign of Mary, Cecil had been one of the original promoters and shareholders of the Russia Company, but he always steadily refused to share in privateering.

pedition to establish a permanent trading-station on the Gold Coast.[1] There were to be at least four ships, one of which, the *Mignon*, belonged to the Queen. Protests and remonstrances from Portuguese and Spaniards were freely made to Cecil, who replied they could not prevent merchants from going to trade where they thought fit. When the Bishop of Aquila pressed him further, he answered, "that the Pope had no right to partition the world and to give and take kingdoms. . . . This idea is the real reason which moved them to oppose the legality of our denunciation of these expeditions much more than any profit they expect to get. . . . They think this navigation business will be a good pretext for breaking the peace, as your Majesty must needs uphold the Pope's authority, against which, both here and in Germany, all will join. I feigned not to understand Cecil's meaning, and treated the matter as concerning the King of Portugal only" (27th November 1561).[2] A draft reply in Cecil's hand to similar remonstrances from the Portuguese Ambassador in April of the same year, is

[1] The expedition and its object had first been suggested to Throgmorton in Paris by an old Portuguese pilot, named Captain Melchior, who had formerly lived for many years on the Sus coast and other parts of West Africa. He had been a pensioner of Francis I. and Henry II., but on the death of the latter, lost his pension. The King of Navarre (Anthony de Bourbon) supported him for a time, and then sent him with his scheme to Throgmorton, who referred him to Cecil. The expedition itself was unsuccessful, but was followed by others under the younger Hawkins, which established a lucrative trade in slaves and produce between Africa, the Spanish Indies, and England. There is an interesting paper in the Record Office, dated 27th May of the following year, 1562, when a Portuguese Ambassador was in England remonstrating against the despatch of a new expedition to Guinea. It is a full description of the coast by Martin Frobisher, who had been for nine months a prisoner of the Portuguese at Elmina. He shows that the Portuguese on the coast exercised no control outside of their forts, and were so detested by the natives that Frobisher and other Englishmen were employed as intermediaries.

[2] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.

still more dignified: "The Queen does not acknowledge the right of the King of Portugal to forbid the subjects of another prince from trading where they like, and she will take care that her subjects are not worse treated in the King of Portugal's dominions than his are in hers."[1]

Amidst his manifold public anxieties Cecil had to bear his share of private trouble. His notes in the Perpetual Calendar at Hatfield record the successive births and deaths of two infant William Cecils, one at Cannon Row in 1559, and the other at Wimbledon in 1561; but at this period he had a daughter and a son living, by his second wife. Thomas, his only son by his first marriage with Mary Cheke, was now a young man of twenty, and in order that he might receive the polish fitting to the heir of a great personage, his father consulted Sir Nicholas Throgmorton, the Ambassador in Paris, in the spring of 1561, with regard to sending him thither. Cecil's own idea was to place him in the household of Coligny, the Admiral of France, now one of the acknowledged leaders of the Protestant party; but Throgmorton, who foresaw, doubtless, the rapidly approaching civil war, dissuaded him from this. "Though you have made the best choice of any man in France, yet for some respects I think the matter should be deferred." His advice was that lodgings should be taken for young Cecil near the embassy, where he might share the Ambassador's table. The youth, he thought, should be "taught to ride, play the lute, dance, play tennis, and use such exercises as are noted ornaments of courtiers."[2] A subsequent recommendation of Thomas Windebank, the young man's governor, to the effect that it would be well to accept Throgmorton's offer, although Sir William Cecil was loth to trespass on his

[1] Foreign State Papers.

[2] Foreign State Papers.

friend's hospitality, in order that the youth "might learn to behave himself, not only at table, but otherwise, according to his estate,"[1] leads us to the conclusion that Thomas Cecil had thitherto not been an apt scholar. Some of the details of Thomas's journey are curious. In addition to Windebank he was accompanied by two servants, and three geldings, which, Throgmorton thought, might as well be sold, as he could obtain others in Paris. The lodgings in Paris for the party and horses would cost about ten sun-crowns a month, and in addition to the money they brought they should have a letter of credit for three hundred crowns. Young Thomas had been to France before by way of Calais,[2] and on this occasion, that he might see fresh country, he went by Rye, Dieppe, and Rouen; and the intention was that he should stay in or near Paris for a year, and then proceed to Italy. Windebank appears to have been unequal to his task, and to have had no control over Thomas. In vain Sir William pressed both his son and Windebank to send him an account of their expenses, and from the first it is seen that the father was misgiving and anxious. Cecil was a reserved man, full of public affairs; but this correspondence[3] proves that he was also a man of deep family affection, and, above all, that he regarded with horror the idea that any scandal should attach to his honoured name. In his first letter to his son, 14th July 1561, after the arrival of the latter in Paris, he strikes the note of distrust. "He wishes him God's blessing, but how he inclines himself to deserve it he knows not." None of his son's three letters, he complains, makes

[1] Foreign State Papers.

[2] In 1559 Throgmorton speaks of the youth at that period as being of great promise—unfortunately unfulfilled.

[3] Foreign Calendar.

any mention of the expense he is incurring. He urges him at once to begin to translate French; and then says, "Fare ye well. Write every time somewhat to my wife." To Windebank the anxious father is more outspoken. How are they spending their time, he asks, and heartily prays that Thomas may serve God with fear and reverence. But Thomas seems to have done nothing of the sort; for, in nearly every letter, Windebank urges Sir William to repeat his injunctions about prayer to his son. But the scapegrace paid little heed.

As soon as they arrived in Paris, Thomas sold his horse for forty crowns, and kept the money for his own spending. Throgmorton was soon tired of him, and advised that he should be sent to Orleans or elsewhere, away from the heat and distractions of Paris; but Thomas was well satisfied where he was. "Of study there is little or nothing yet," he coolly writes to his father, after he had been in Paris for a month. They were still sight-seeing, and he grows almost eloquent in his description of a fight he had seen at court between a lion and three dogs, in which the latter were victorious. They lodged in the house of a gentleman, "a courtier and learned, but of indifferent good religion," to whom they paid three hundred crowns a month for board and lodging; but this was not by any means all the expense. The heir spent £20 for his winter clothes; he must have a fashionable footcloth for his riding nag. The horses, too, were expensive, and Sir William complained. All gentlemen of estimation here ride, writes Windebank, and if he follow not the manner of the country, he will be less considered: "if all gentlemen ride, it is not meet for Mr. Thomas to go afoot."

The father was accompanying the Queen during the autumn on her progress through Essex, and writes from various country-houses to his son and Windebank, beg-

ging the former to study, to pray, to avoid ill company, to take heed of surfeits, late suppers, prodigality, and the like; but apparently to no effect. Thomas wrote rarely and badly, his French did not improve, and he still failed to write to his learned step-mother, greatly to his father's anger. At length he fell seriously ill, and promised amendment, which for a time seemed hopeful.

Through all the father's anxiety his master passions for books, heraldry, and gardening are discernible, as well as his pride of race. He constantly orders Windebank to send him stated books, and to keep on the look-out for new plants, or good gardeners, that may be sent to England. In September he requests that some booksellers' catalogues may be forwarded, that he may select some books to "garnish" his library. He was anxious that his son should study the genealogy and alliances of noble French families, and prays that a herald may be engaged to instruct him. But Thomas soon relapsed, and rumour of his ill-behaviour reached Sir William, not at first from Windebank. In March 1562 an angry and indignant letter went from Cecil to his son, reproaching him for his bad conduct. There was no amendment, he said, and all who came from Paris gave him the character of "a dissolute, slothful, negligent, and careless young man," and the letter is signed, "Your father of an unworthy son." A week later, 2nd April, Cecil wrote a characteristic and affecting letter to Windebank, which deserves to be quoted nearly in full, for it shows us the man more clearly than reams of State papers. "Windebank," it runs, "I am here used to pains and troubles, but none creep so near my heart as doth this of my lewd son. I am perplexed what to think. The shame that I shall receive to have so unruled a son grieveth me more than if I had lost him

in honest death. Good Windebank, consult my dear friend Sir Nicholas Throgmorton, to whom I have referred the whole. I could be best content that he would commit him secretly to some sharp prison. If this shall not seem good, yet would I rather have him sent away to Strasburg if possible, or to Lorraine, for my grief will grow double to see him before some sort of amends. If none of these will serve, then bring him home and I shall receive that which it pleaseth God to lay on my shoulders; that is, in the midst of my business, for comfort a daily torment. If ye shall come home with him, to cover the shame, let it appear to be by reason of the troubles there.[1] I rather desire to have this summer spent, though it were but to be absent from my sight. I am so troubled as well, what to write I know not."

Windebank had been protesting for some time his own unfitness—which was obvious—and sending hints of the ill-conduct of his charge, who had borrowed money on the credit of others, and scandalised his friends by his dissoluteness; but at last the long-suffering tutor rebelled, and wrote, 26th April, to Cecil, "I have forborne to write plainly, but now I am clean out of hope, and a n forced to do so. Sir, I see that Mr. Thomas has utterly no mind nor disposition to apply to any learning; being carried away by other affections that rule him, so that it maketh him forget his duty in all things;" and with this Windebank resigns his charge, for Thomas had openly defied him; advocates his immediate recall if the war in France will allow him to come, or otherwise that he should be sent to Flanders. But Windebank himself had had enough of Thomas Cecil, and refused to accompany him further.

This instructive correspondence helps us to see

[1] The first war of religion in France.

that, beyond even his wounded paternal affection, Sir William Cecil's deepest feeling was sensitiveness to the opinion of the world about him. That his son should be unworthy touched him to the quick; but that the world should see any shame or reproach resting upon the heir of his house and name, was unendurable agony to one whose main social aims were to trace an ancient ancestry and head a noble posterity.

CHAPTER VI

1562–1564.

THE abortive conspiracy of the Hamiltons in the spring of 1562, and Arran's madness, finally proved the hopelessness of his suit for Mary's hand, and Lord James and Maitland had now abandoned him. Both of those statesmen, in union with Cecil, still strove to hold the balance evenly, and to avoid religious strife in the country, in the hope that if the Scottish Queen married a nominee of England, Elizabeth would eventually recognise her as the heiress to the English throne. But the agitation of the English Catholics, and the attempts of Darnley's mother to force matters, had rendered the position extremely difficult, and Cecil was busy unravelling plots real and imaginary. The visit of a Swedish Ambassador to Scotland on a matrimonial mission had caused a sudden scare in London; but Mary's prompt dismissal of him, and her continued amiable letters to Elizabeth, had somewhat disarmed suspicion against her personally. Her uncle the Marquis d'Elbœuf was splendidly entertained in the English court on his way home to France, and negotiations were set on foot for a visit of Mary to the north of England in the summer, for the purpose of an interview with the English Queen. But withal Cecil was ill at ease, for the Guises and the Catholics of France were now in arms,[1] and it was impossible to see how the great struggle of the faith would end. If

[1] The massacre of Vassy, which began the civil war, took place on the 1st March 1562.

the Guises finally captured the government of France, then England must accept Philip's terms for a Spanish alliance, or be inevitably ruined. But for the present it was the policy of Elizabeth and Cecil to keep a tight rein on the Catholics in England,[1] and encourage Condé and Coligny in France.[2]

The Bishop of Aquila had been growing more and more discontented in his palace in the Strand (Durham Place). He had no counsels to give to his master now but those of violence, for he had been outwitted too often to believe in the interested professions of any party in Elizabeth's court. But the emissaries of the discontented Catholics, the servants of turbulent Lady Margaret Lennox, Shan O'Neil, and his train of wild gallowglasses—all those who hated Elizabeth and Protestantism—found in the old Bishop an eager listener to their whispered treason. Cecil knew all this, for his spies were everywhere. That the Bishop was up to mischief was clear; but yet Cecil did not know whether he was hatching any plot in connection with Mary Stuart's marriage; and that was the main point of danger for the present. The Queen of Scots, it is true, had more than once expressed to Randolph, the English Ambassador, her disapproval of the attitude of her uncles in France. If she wished to keep friendly with her own ministers and the English Queen, indeed, it was necessary for her to do so; but her powers of dissimulation were known; the religious struggle had drawn the Guises nearer to Philip; and the Queen-mother, herself alarmed at the rising power and warlike attitude of princes of the blood, like Navarre and Condé,

[1] See Grindall's long list of recusants in prison, in hiding, and in exile at the end of 1561 (Domestic Calendar).

[2] See Sidney and Throgmorton's letters to Cecil (Foreign Calendar, May 1562).

was once more turning to her Spanish son-in-law and the Catholics. A Catholic plot combining the Guises, Philip, Mary Stuart, and Catharine de Medici, would be threatening indeed, and it behoved Cecil to be watchful.[1]

As Durham House had only been lent to the Spanish Ambassador by the Queen, Cecil had appointed the English gatekeeper at the gate in the Strand, and from him learnt of those who went in and out, even by the river stairs. But this was not enough. At the end of April he contrived to buy over an Italian secretary of the Bishop, a man named Borghese Venturini, from whom he obtained particulars of the Ambassador's letters.[2] They abounded with treasonable suggestions, dark hints at conspiracy, and vituperation of the Queen and Cecil, but they disclosed no deep-laid plot of Spain. Cecil nevertheless was not satisfied, and kept on the watch.

The Prince of Condé and the Protestants were now in array against the Guises, and Catharine de Medici was in the power of the latter. Both sides had striven to obtain the help of the German Protestant princes, but, in a great measure due to Cecil's foresight, their sympathies

[1] Almost every letter from Throgmorton to Cecil at this juncture sounds the note of alarm at the possibility of such a combination. A Portuguese Ambassador had recently been sent to England, once more to remonstrate about the English trade with Guinea (as fruitlessly as in the previous year). He lodged with the Bishop of Aquila at Durham Place, and Throgmorton was confident that the real object of his mission was to perfect the arrangement of a Catholic rising in England in conjunction with Mary Stuart, the Guises, and Philip. The fears, however, were perfectly groundless as yet so far as regarded Philip. He was in no hurry to help the Guises until he had them pledged body and soul, and had crushed reform in his own Netherlands. But of course Cecil was unable to penetrate Philip's policy so well as we can, with all his most private correspondence before us. It is worthy of mention that D'Antas, the Portuguese Ambassador above referred to, offered Cecil a regular pension from his sovereign if he would look favourably upon his interests. Cecil's reply is not forthcoming; but the offer cannot have been accepted, for the Secretary never varied in his assertion of the right of English merchants to trade on the West African and Brazilian coasts.

[2] See statements of Borghese Venturini (State Papers, Foreign).

were on the side of Condé. Cecil laboured incessantly, but against many difficulties, for the Queen was anxious to avoid the cost and risk of pledging herself too deeply. In an important letter to Throgmorton, 16th July 1562, he thus lays bare his plans and his obstacles: "Our thynges here depend so upon those matters ther (*i.e.* in France) that yow shall well ynough judg thereof without advertisement. This *hardness* here will indanger all, I feare. Sir Thomas Wroth, I trust, shall into Germany with spede: my device is to sollicite them, and to offer a contribution for an army to enter France. . . . Good Mr. Throgmorton, omitt not now to advertise us from time to time, for this Bishop of Aquila letteth not weekly to forge new devices. . . . Continue your wryting to putt the Quene's Majesty in remembrance of her peril if the Guisans prosper. And so, being overweryed with care, I end."[1]

There is another document of the same period in Cecil's hand, which also shows how earnestly he tried to combat the peril, and make the Queen and Council understand it. It is a memorial setting forth "the perills growing uppon the overthrow of the Prince of Condé's cause,"[2] and points out that if Condé be allowed to fall, the Guises would be supreme in France, "and to maynteane their faction they will pleasure the King of Spayne all that they maye. Hereupon shall follow a complott betwixt them twoo . . . the King of Spayne to unhable the house of Navarre for ever clayming the Kingdom of Navarre; and the house of Guise to promote their niece the Queen of Scotts to the crown of England. For doing thereof twoo thyngs principally will be attempted: the marriage of the sayd Queen with the Prince of Spayne, and the realme of Ireland to be

[1] Throgmorton Papers; *in extenso* in Forbes.
[2] State Papers, Foreign; *in extenso* in Forbes.

given in a paye to the King of Spayne." All English Catholics, he continues, will be told to make ready, and at a given moment rise; the Council of Trent will condemn all Protestants; the Guises, Spain, and the Pope will unite England and Scotland under Mary, and Protestantism will be undone. It will be, he says, too late then to withstand it, "for it shall be lyke a great rock of stone that is fallyng downe from the topp of a mountayn, which when it is comming no force can stey."

Cecil's own efforts were unwearied and ubiquitous. Randolph in Scotland, Throgmorton in France, Mundt with the German princes, and Sir Peter Mewtys, and afterwards Throgmorton with Condé, seconded him manfully. Spies, and secret agents paid by him, were in every court and every camp; the prisons were crammed with recusants; the Earl of Lennox, Darnley's father, was in the Tower; his wife, Lady Margaret, was in durance at Shene; whilst her questionable words and treasonable practices were being slowly unravelled by informers,[1] the English Catholic nobles were closely watched, and for a month every line the Spanish Ambassador wrote was secretly conveyed to Cecil by Borghese. Once, early in May, the Bishop's courier, with important letters for the Duchess of Parma, was stopped two miles beyond Gravesend by pretended highwaymen, who were really gentlemen (the brothers Cobham) in Cecil's pay, and the man was detained whilst the letters were sent to the Secretary to be deciphered and copied. At last things came to a crisis, the old Ambassador discovered that Borghese was the traitor,[2] and the latter in fear of his life, having fought with a fellow-servant, fled to Cecil. The Bishop was in a towering rage, and complained bitterly to the Queen. She told him that if she

[1] See the examinations in State Papers, Foreign, 1562.

[2] Sir Henry Sidney divulged it to the Bishop.

suspected that anything was being written in her country to her detriment, she should stop posts and examine what she pleased; and when he pleaded privilege, she retorted, that he was not privileged to plot injury to her in her own realm. In vain the Bishop protested that he had not plotted, and railed against Cecil. He only had Dudley on his side, and Dudley did not count for much in a great emergency like this.[1] The next day (23rd May) Cecil wrote a dignified letter to the Ambassador. He honours him as the King's Ambassador, he says, reverences him as a bishop, and esteems him as a nobleman; and he wishes to know in which capacity he complains of his acts. He, Cecil, is ready, as a son of no mean ancestry, to justify himself to the Bishop in either character; but if the Bishop has "any evil opinion of him, he will thank him to address him personally, and not complain to others." The Bishop's reply was equally stiff. He cannot approve of his, Cecil's, advice on public matters, which has great weight with the Queen, but that does not diminish his respect for him in his private capacity.[2] In vain the Bishop prayed his master to recall him if he could not protect him against the insults to which he was exposed; in vain he tried to move Elizabeth, by alternate flattery and threats, to restore Borghese to him; in vain he endeavoured to bribe his servant back again, or to have him killed; Cecil was ready for him at every turn, and he could do no more than plot and pray for vengeance in his private rooms at Durham Place, whilst Cecil was examining informers against him and the Queen was threatening him with expulsion.

In the meanwhile Mary Stuart was still on her good

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.

[2] Bitter as the Bishop was against Cecil's policy, which checkmated him on every side, it is only fair to say that he usually speaks of his character with great respect.

behaviour, in the hope that the statesmen's plan for an agreement with Elizabeth on the basis of the recognition by the latter of Mary's claim to the English succession might eventually be adopted. Secretary Maitland of Lethington was in London in the summer in the interests of this plan, and for the purpose of arranging the much talked-of meeting between the Queens. Mary was eager for the interview, from which she expected much, and Elizabeth, supported by Dudley, was also in favour of it. But Cecil from the first looked coldly upon it, although, as usual, his opposition to it was indirect and covert. The whole of his policy at present turned upon supporting the French Huguenots in arms, and ruining the Guises; and it is obvious that too close a friendship between the Queens would have paralysed him in this direction. The matter of the interview was dragged out and talked about until the season became too late for it to be held that year, and, greatly to Mary's disappointment, it was postponed nominally until the following summer. The intrigue to marry Mary to Darnley had unquestionably gone far. It was warmly supported by Catharine de Medici, who was, of course, against a Spanish marriage; by Lord James, as offering the best prospect of peace and the English succession to his sister; and by Dudley, because it might furnish a precedent for his own marriage with Elizabeth. The latter affected to approve of it for a time; but she dreaded the union of the two strongest claimants to her succession, and was never really in favour of it.

Slowly, but surely, Cecil's policy gained ground. To cripple the Catholic party in France and destroy the influence of the Guises, would render impossible that which of all things he dreaded most, namely, a French domination of Scotland in the interest of Catholicism. With the ostensible object of suppressing piracy in the

Channel, a considerable fleet was fitted out in the mouth of the Humber, but with the real aim of carrying aid to the Huguenots when an opportune moment arrived. Protestant Germans and Switzers had flocked to Condé, Dandelot and Coligny. Montgomerie held Rouen against the Guises, and the Vidame de Chartres seized Havre de Grace. An emissary came from the Vidame in July, to offer this important port to the Queen of England as a base from which to help the reformers. The offer was a tempting one, for it might enable her to insist later upon the restoration of Calais; but Elizabeth was distrustful.[1]

Philip's sister, the Governess of the Netherlands, sent a remonstrance, shocked at the very idea that a Queen should send aid to rebels against their sovereign; Catharine de Medici despatched Marshal Vielleville to threaten Elizabeth with a national war both with France and Spain if she sent assistance to Condé and those who were in arms against the Government. But Philip's Netherlands were now in almost open revolt, and though he made a show of sending troops to help the French Catholics, it was evident that he could not do much, and for the present Elizabeth and Cecil could disregard him, knowing that if the worst came to the worst, he would never allow the French influence in England to become dominant. On the 20th September, Elizabeth signed the treaty by which she agreed to send a large sum of money and 6000 troops to France to aid Condé; 3000 of which were to hold Havre, and the rest to reinforce the Huguenots in Dieppe and Rouen. Elizabeth, in a proclamation drawn up by Cecil, swore that she took this step for the defence of the French King,[2] and

[1] Dudley wrote to Throgmorton (May 1562) that the Queen was favourable to Condé and the Huguenots, "but her Majestie seemeth very wareful in too much open show towards them" (State Papers, Foreign).

[2] *In extenso* in Forbes.

sent all sorts of reassuring messages to Catharine and her son; but the pregnant fact still remained, that civil war in France was to be promoted by an English army, and that the Queen of England had for the first time openly assumed the position of leader of the Protestant faith throughout the world, in defiance of the Governments both of France and Spain.

How great was the Queen's hesitation to the last at assuming this vast responsibility is seen in a letter from Cecil to his old friend, Sir Thomas Smith, who was sent to replace Throgmorton as Ambassador to France (Sir Nicholas remaining with Condé) only a week before the English force actually sailed (22nd September 1562). "When our men shall goo," he writes, "or whether they shall goo or not, I cannot mak certain. I mean to send yow as soon as the fact is enterprised. . . . We begyn to hear of towardness to accord, and then we shall lose much labour." The troops sailed under Sir Adrian Poynings on the 27th September, and were subsequently commanded by the Earl of Warwick, Dudley's brother. Suddenly, a few days afterwards, the Queen fell ill of smallpox at Hampton Court, and for a time was like to die. The confusion of the court was great, for the succession was still undecided. Dudley and a considerable party of his friends were openly, almost violently, in favour of the Earl of Huntingdon; whilst others headed by Cecil were strongly desirous of following the will of Henry VIII., and adopting Catharine Grey. The Catholics were divided, and advised the examination of the question from a legal point of view; but whilst the dissensions were in progress, the Queen unexpectedly rallied and the danger passed. During her peril she had expressed the most extravagant affection for Dudley, and begged the Council to appoint him Protector; but with her recovery affairs assumed

their normal course, the only outcome of the illness being the great strengthening of Dudley's influence, and his appointment to the Council with the Duke of Norfolk. The effect of Dudley's rise, which meant the temporary decline of Cecil, was soon seen. The fall of Rouen and Dieppe to the King caused the English contingent to be concentrated at Havre, where a reinforcement of 2000 more men was reported to be required to hold the place. The Queen began to look with alarm at her responsibility, and the Council was prompt in throwing the blame upon Cecil, who absented himself from the meetings on the pretext of illness. Secret attempts were made also to bring about a pacification between Condé, the Guises, the Queen-mother and England, greatly to the disgust of Throgmorton, who dreaded a close friendship with the French as much as Cecil himself.

The negotiations with Catharine de Medici were conducted by Smith, and were based upon the restoration of Calais to Elizabeth, the toleration of Protestantism in France, and the assurance of the Guises that they would not interfere in Scotland;[1] but whilst they were in progress the war followed its course. The King of Navarre fell fighting before Rouen against his former friends, the Protestants; at the great battle of Dreux (19th December 1562), Condé, the Protestant chief, and Constable Montmorenci on the Catholic side, were taken prisoners, and Coligny, with a mere remnant of his Protestants, alone

[1] Smith sent a message to Throgmorton (21st November 1562) assuring him that his peace negotiations with the Queen-mother and his friendship with the Cardinal were not sincere, but only to "discover their minds." It is hardly probable that this was the case; although Smith, as a zealous Protestant, certainly did not anticipate the abandonment of the cause of the reformers. Much less did he intend for England to be thrown over by both sides as she was. In a letter to Cecil (17th December) he relates his indignant remonstrance to the Queen-mother when he heard that the Guisans in Paris had issued a proclamation of war against Queen Elizabeth as an enemy of the faith. (Letters *in extenso* in Forbes.)

kept the field. At the siege of Orleans (18th February 1563), Guise was assassinated, and a pacification then became possible. Condé, away from honest Coligny and La Noue, was but a weak vessel, as his brother Navarre had been, and Catharine well knew how to manage such men. All of Cecil's distrust of the French was justified, and the shameful treaty of Amboise was signed (19th March), leaving Elizabeth and the English in the lurch. The moment that English policy escaped from the capable hands of Cecil, to pass temporarily under the lamentable influence of Dudley, disaster and failure were the inevitable result.

The Queen could do no more than rail at Condé's envoy, Briquemault, and call his master a lying scamp; pestilence and famine decimated the English garrison at Havre, closely beleaguered by the French; and in the autumn of 1563 the force had to be withdrawn without glory or material satisfaction. Before this happened, however, cautious Cecil was gradually working affairs into his own groove again. Dudley had continued to send amiable messages to the Spanish Ambassador, whilst promoting an agreement with the French Government, and had exercised his influence in favour of the release of Lennox from the Tower; the object being in both cases to curry favour with the Catholics, and so to diminish Cecil's power. As usual the Secretary's opposition was an indirect one. His spies had kept him informed of the old Spanish Bishop's continued correspondence with Shan O'Neil; of his having received and encouraged foolish Arthur Pole in his treason, and having allowed English people, against the law, to attend the embassy mass; and he watched and waited for an opportunity to demonstrate to the Catholics the powerlessness of both the Bishop and his master. He had not to wait long. One evening at the beginning of January 1563, as the light was failing,

a knot of idle hangers-on of the Bishop's household were lounging at the great gate of Durham Place opening to the Strand. An Italian Protestant captain, in the service of the Vidame de Chartres, swaggered down the street on his way to Whitehall, and from the Bishop's gateway a lad shot a harquebuss at him, and missed him. The captain whipped out his long rapier and pursued the would-be murderer to the outer courtyard. The Bishop's servants closed the gates against the pursuers, and the assassin ran up shouting to the door of the chamber where the Ambassador was playing cards with the French Ambassador and a Guisan hostage, Nantouillet, Provost, of Paris. A few hurried words of explanation at the door—for the Guisan had paid the boy to do the act—and the assassin was hurried down to the water gate, where a boat was in waiting, and he was allowed to escape, whilst his pursuers were thundering at the solid gates of the inner court.

This was enough for Cecil. New locks were put on the house gates, and the keys held by the "heretic English gatekeeper." The Bishop could obtain no interview with the Queen, but was obliged to see Cecil instead. Send me to jail, he indignantly pleaded, if I have offended; but if nothing is proved against me, as nothing can be, at least let me have free ingress and egress from my own house. Cecil's reply was a long indictment of the Bishop's whole proceedings. The Ambassador, he said, was by the Queen's kindness living in one of her houses, which had been turned into a hotbed of conspiracies against her and a refuge for malefactors. The law of the land had been openly defied, and the Queen desired the Ambassador to quit her house. In vain the Bishop protested. One indignity after another was placed upon him. The folks going to mass in the embassy were haled off to prison as they

came out; all the most private conversations between the Ambassador and the English rebels were repeated to him by Cecil; he was confronted with the text of his most secret despatches; he was turned out of Durham House with ignominy, and all he could do was to weep tears of rage, and pray Philip to avenge him.[1] But Philip's hands were more than full in the Netherlands now, as Cecil knew, for before the writing-table in the Secretary's room in Cecil House[2] there stood a portrait of Count Egmont,[3] and Gresham's agents in Antwerp, Bruges, and Brussels left no event unreported. The blow to the Spanish Ambassador was cleverly planned by Cecil. That the former had been futilely plotting, was known, and it served as a good pretext for his disgrace; but the real reason for it was the need to prove to Dudley and his friends, and to the discontented Catholics, that they were leaning on a broken reed when they depended upon Spain to help them against the Secretary. The bankrupt, heartbroken old Bishop was a good object-lesson. If his master could not pay his debts or defend him from deliberate indignity, much less could he help discontented Englishmen who only had their own ends to serve.

Almost simultaneously with the Bishop's disgrace, and also partly explaining it, another important move was made. The second Parliament of Elizabeth was opened on the 12th January 1563 by the Queen herself, in great state. The speech of Lord Keeper Bacon dwelt

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.

[2] Cecil had built for himself (1560) a splendid mansion in the Strand, on the site of the present Exeter Hall, the grounds extending back to Covent Garden. It was joined on the west by the Earl of Bedford's estate, for which in a subsequent generation it was exchanged. Cecil appears to have continued in the possession of his house at Westminster, adjoining Whitehall, no doubt for business purposes.

[3] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.

at length on the want of order and discipline in the Anglican Church, the incompetency of many of the ministers, and the want of uniformity in the services.[1] Cecil himself was offered and refused the Speakership, but to him has been attributed the authorship of the harangue which the Speaker (Williams) addressed to the Queen.[2] The decay of schools and the poverty of benefices through lay impropriations is dwelt on at length in this speech, and the completion of the reform of religion and learning in the Queen's dominions advocated. Cecil followed this with a speech denouncing the Queen's enemies, the Guises and the Catholics, supported by the countenance of Spain. The penalties for refusing the oath of supremacy were greatly increased, the oath was rendered obligatory upon every person holding any sort of office, and other acts for insuring the progress of Protestantism were made,[3] as well as large subsidies granted. The Catholic lords, even the Lord Treasurer (Winchester), were uneasy and apprehensive; but they dared not move, for Cecil and the Protestants had now a firm grasp of affairs, and the Secretary was vehement in Parliament in favour of the proposed ecclesiastical measures. The Queen's embarrassments, he said, arose entirely from her determination to resist the authority of the Pope, who had bribed Spain, the Austrian and German princes. She now stood alone, with the Catholic world against her, but he exhorted all faithful subjects to defend her with laws, life, and property.[4] At the same time, as the Parliament was sitting, Convocation assembled to settle the ritual and doctrine of the Church. The articles were reformed and altered to thirty-nine,

[1] Sir Simon D'Ewes' Journal. [2] Strype.

[3] The Bishop of Aquila, in giving an account of these measures, says, that it would seem as if they were designed to mimic the Spanish Inquisition.

[4] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.

the catechism and the homilies were adopted, and other measures tending to uniformity of doctrine were agreed upon, but in a way which, although it did not satisfy the Puritan minority, was intended to include as large a number as possible of those who were not irreconcilably pledged to the Roman faith.

Cecil's hand can be traced clearly in all these activities, for they struck indirectly at his enemies; but a bolder step in the same direction taken by Parliament itself can only be surmised as being prompted by him. Dudley had for months been gaining friends for the candidature of the Earl of Huntingdon as heir to the crown, whilst the Catholics were divided on the claims of Mary Stuart and Darnley. Cecil was determined, if possible, to prevent the success of either of them, and desired to adhere to the Parliamentary title of Lady Catharine[1] (Countess of Hertford). The House of Com-

[1] The marriage of the unfortunate Lady Catharine Grey with Lord Hertford—the eldest son of Somerset—was contracted secretly, and when the birth of a son made the matter public, the Queen was intensely indignant, and refused to acknowledge the union, both Lord and Lady Hertford being committed to the Tower. Guzman says that Cecil brought about the marriage; but there is no evidence whatever of this. Lord Hertford was in Paris with Cecil's son, Thomas, when the affair was discovered, and was recalled in haste by the Queen. As soon as Cecil heard of it, he warned his son not to associate with Hertford. Cecil wrote to his friend Smith at the same time, "I pray that God may by this chance give her Majesty a disposition to consider hereof (*i.e.* the succession), that either by her marriage or by some common order we her poor subjects may know where to lean and adventure our lives with content to our consciences." Greatly to Cecil's annoyance the question of Catharine's guilt was referred to him for examination and report. He assured Smith in a letter that he would judge impartially, and he did so; for Parker, the Archbishop, on his report, pronounced against the marriage, but Cecil continued on close terms of intimacy with the Grey family, who all called him cousin (Lady Cecil's brother married Catharine Grey's cousin), and certainly favoured Lady Catharine's claims under the will of Henry VIII. Cecil cautiously did his best to soften the punishment, and finally obtained the removal of both husband and wife from the Tower into private custody. Many letters on the subject from the Greys to Cecil will be found in Lansdowne MSS. 2.

mons was mainly Protestant, and under the influence of Cecil; and it was agreed that deputations of both Houses should petition the Queen either to fix the succession or else to marry, the latter alternative being probably added out of politeness. The Queen received the deputations very ungraciously. She turned her back on the Commons, and for a long time sent no answer at all. On an address being presented to the Council begging them to remind her, she sent an answer by Cecil and Rogers to the effect that "she doubted not the grave heads of this House did right well consider that she forgot not the suit of this House for the succession, the matter being so weighty; nor could forget it; but she willed the young heads to take example of their elders." To the Lords she was more outspoken. She asked them whether they thought what they saw on her face were wrinkles. They were nothing of the sort, but pockmarks, and she was not so old yet that she had lost hope of having children of her own to succeed her.[1] This was a rebuff to Cecil's policy; but only what might have been expected from the Queen, whose principal care was to sustain herself without concerning herself greatly as to what came after her; whereas the Secretary was doubtless thinking of what would become of himself and the Protestant party if she died. For Mary Stuart, and even her Protestant Councillors, he knew, were busy intriguing for the succession, and her claims were powerfully supported, even in England.

Maitland of Lethington came to London during the sitting of Parliament to forward his mistress's claims. He found Cecil now against the solution which he had formerly favoured, namely, the abandonment of Mary's present claims in exchange for the reversion, failing Elizabeth and her descendants. Cecil was more dis-

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.

trustful of the French than ever; for the defection of Condé had turned all arms against the English in Havre, and he knew that Cardinal Lorraine was still untiring in his planning of the Austrian match for Mary, whilst the Protestants of France and Germany watched unmoved the isolation and embarrassment of England. Maitland therefore soon persuaded himself that his mistress had not much more to hope for now from the dominant party in England than from Elizabeth herself. Mary was convinced that both Catharine de Medici and the English Queen wished to force her into an unworthy Protestant marriage with a subject, in order to injure her prestige with English Catholics and decrease the power of the Guises.[1] Maitland consequently cast his eyes to another quarter. Mary was determined to fight for the English succession, if she could not get it by fair means; and with this end she wanted a consort strong enough to force her claims, which her uncle's candidate, the Archduke Charles, could not do. She and Maitland accordingly threw over the Guises, who did not wish their niece to marry a prince strong enough to exclude *them*, and boldly proposed a marriage with Philip's heir, Don Carlos. Maitland went one night secretly to the Bishop of Aquila in London, and cautiously opened the negotiation. The Queen of Scots, he said, was determined never to marry a Protestant, even if he owned half the world, nor would she accept a husband from the hands of the Queen of England. The French and English

[1] She was probably correct in this. When Elizabeth saw Maitland in London she suggested Dudley as a suitable husband to Mary; and when the Scotsman hinted that his mistress was not so selfish as to deprive Elizabeth of a person so much cherished by herself, the English Queen, greatly to Maitland's confusion, hinted at the Earl of Warwick, Dudley's brother. Maitland cleverly silenced the Queen by suggesting that, as Elizabeth was so much older than Mary, she should marry Dudley first herself, and when she died, leave to the Scottish Queen both her widower and her kingdom.

Queens were almost equally against her, the Duke of Guise was dead, the Archduke Charles was not strong enough to help her; would Philip consent to a marriage with his son?

Whilst this matter was being discussed by Maitland and the Bishop and the Spanish partisans in England, the news of the untoward adventure of Mary Stuart with Chastelard arrived in London. Mary said it was a plot of the Queen-mother to discredit her; but the old Bishop was no less anxious than before to urge his master to seize such an opportunity as that offered by the proposed marriage. But Philip was slow. His hands were full and his coffers were empty as usual, and whilst he was asking for pledges and guarantees from the Scots and the English Catholics, the opportunity passed. Philip, in appearance at all events, accepted the suggestion, in alarm lest a refusal might lead to a marriage between Mary and the boy-King of France; for, as he says, "I well bear in mind the anxiety I underwent from King Francis when he was married to this Queen, and I am sure that if he had lived we could not have avoided war, on the ground of my protection of the Queen of England, whose country he would have invaded."[1] But whilst Philip was pondering—and it must be conceded that this time he had much reason for hesitation—others were acting. When Lethington came back from France, on his way through London to Scotland, he saw the Spanish Bishop again. He found that matters had not progressed, and was disheartened. Elizabeth threatened his mistress with her undying enmity if she married a member of the House of Austria, and Cecil persuaded him that the Queen might yet appoint Mary her heir if she married to her liking. Lady Margaret, also, was now ostentatiously favoured by the Queen, and Maitland returned to Scot-

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.

land convinced that it would be unsafe to look elsewhere than to England for support, and that, after all, the best solution of his country's difficulties would be the marriage of Mary and Darnley under Elizabeth's patronage. This certainly was the impression that the English Government wished him to convey, for whilst it lasted it would check more ambitious schemes which would be dangerous to England.

So far Cecil's policy, though often thwarted by the Queen's waywardness and Dudley's ambition, had been in the main successful. The French had been kept out of Scotland, the Catholics in England had been divided and discouraged, whilst waverers were conciliated; the Anglican Church was more firmly established, and Philip had been kept more or less friendly, out of fear of a league of Protestants on the one hand and of French influence in England on the other. Nor was the indefatigable Secretary's efforts confined to foreign affairs. The strengthening of the Queen's navy and the building of merchantmen continued without intermission. Camden says that in consequence of this activity there were now (1562) 20,000 fighting men ready for sea service alone. All the fortresses were put into order for defence, and the shortcomings of material and system demonstrated in the Scottish campaign were remedied. The ample correspondence on these points in the Hatfield Papers are all endorsed, annotated, or drafted in Sir William Cecil's own hand, and no detail seems to have escaped him.[1]

[1] Cecil was also much interested in the promotion of mineralogy. A patent was granted in 1563 to a German named Schutz who was skilled in the discovery of calamine and the manufacture of brass therewith. For the working of this patent a company was afterwards formed, Cecil, Bacon, Norfolk, Pembroke, Leicester, and others being shareholders, and a great impetus was given in consequence to the founding of brass cannon. Much encouragement was also given by Cecil at this and later periods to German mineralogists for the working of English mines.

Notwithstanding his frequent illness, as recorded in his journals, his work must have been incessant. In addition to his vast administrative duties, he had, on Sir Thomas Parry's death, been appointed to the important post of Master of the Court of Wards, which assumed the guardianship of the estates of minors; and Camden speaks of him as "managing this place, as he did all his others, very providentially for the service of his prince and the wards, for his own profit moderately, and for the benefit of his followers and retainers, yet without offence, and with great commendations for his integrity." His interest, too, in the universities, and particularly that of Cambridge, was constant. He had been appointed Chancellor of the University in the first year of Elizabeth's reign, and had worked manfully to introduce order and reform into the institution.[1] In June 1562, Cecil endeavoured to resign his Chancellorship, his pretexts being his unfitness for the post, his want of leisure, and the serious contentions which existed in the University; but the real reason was that which he cited last, namely, the tendency to laxity with regard to uniform worship manifested by a large number of the masters and students. "Lastly," he says, "which most of all I lament, I cannot find such care in the heads of houses there to supply my lack as I hoped for, to the ruling of inordinate youth, to the observation of good order, and increase of learning and knowledge of God. For I see that if the wiser sort that have authority will not join earnestly together to overrule the licentious part of youth in breaking orders, and the stubbornness of others that malign and deprave the eccle-

[1] In a letter to the Vice-Chancellor (Dr. Perne) in April 1560, Cecil conveyed the pleasant news of the Queen's intention to grant a number of prebends and exhibitions to those divinity students that shall be recommended "as fittest to receive the same promotions and exhibitions." The object of this was to encourage the divinity students to embrace the Protestant form of worship, which they were loth to do. (Harl. MSS., 7037, 265–66).

siastical orders established by law in this realm, I shall shortly hear no good or comfortable report from thence. And to keep an office of authority by which these disorders may be remedied, and not to use it, is to betray the safety of the same, whereof I have some conscience. . . . And so I end, praying you all to accept this, my perplexed writing and complaint, to proceed of a careful mind that I bear to that honourable and dear University; whereof, although I was once but a simple, small, unlearned, low member, I love," &c., &c. Only on the promise of complete amendment on the part of heads of houses, and at the intercession of Archbishop Parker, Sir William withdrew his resignation and continued his labours in favour of the University.[1]

In the autumn of the following year (1564) the Queen in her progress was splendidly entertained at the University. Upon Cecil as Chancellor, as well as Secretary of State, fell the responsibility of making the arrangements; and the letters which relate to the visit, as usual exhibit his perfect mastery of detail. From the avoidance of contagion of plague (which had devastated London in the previous year) to the supply of lodgings for the visitors, everything seems to have been settled with him. He was specially anxious, he said, that the University he loved should make a good figure before the Queen; he himself would lodge "with my olde nurse in St. John's College," but the rest of the University was to be turned inside out for the entertainment of the court. The choristers' school was made into a buttery, the pantry and ewery were at King's, Gonville and Caius was sacred to the Maids of Honour,

[1] There is in the Domestic State Papers of 1565 a draft letter of the Council, written by Cecil to the Vice-Chancellor, forbidding and ordering the suppression in Cambridge of all shows, booths, gaming-houses, &c., as being unseemly and dangerous.

rushes strewed the roadways, the houses were hung with arras; the scholars were drilled to kneel as the Queen passed and cry *Vivat Regina*, "and after that quietly and orderly to depart home to their colleges, and in no wise to come to the court." Sir William Cecil with his wife arrived the day before the Queen (4th August 1564). "I am in great anxiety," he wrote a few days previously, "for the well-doing of things there; and I find myself much troubled with other business, and with an unhappy grief in my foote." But notwithstanding his gout, he was received with great ceremony and a Latin oration, and was presented with two pairs of gloves, a marchpain, and two sugar loaves. His great anxiety, expressed to the authorities, was that "uniformity should be shown in apparel and religion, and especially in the setting of the communion table."

Of the endless orations, the presents, and pedantry with which the Queen was received, of her own coyness about her Latin, of the solemn disputations and entertainments, this is no place to speak; but the official accounts[1] represent the Queen as being agreeably surprised at her reception. After the first service at King's she "thanked God that had sent her to this University, where she, altogether against her expectation, was so received that she thought could not be better." This was the first day; but a Catholic friend of the new Spanish Ambassador[2] told him that the Queen's commendations had so elated the authorities that they besought her to witness one more entertainment. As she was unable to delay her departure, the actors followed her to the first stopping-place, where the proposed

[1] Full account of the visit, with the speeches, &c., will be found in Nichol's "Progresses of Queen Elizabeth."

[2] The old Bishop of Aquila had died, probably of the plague, in the previous autumn at Langley, near Windsor. He had been succeeded by Don Diego Guzman de Silva.

comedy was represented before her. "The actors came in," writes Guzman, "dressed as some of the imprisoned bishops. First came the Bishop of London (*i.e.* Bonner), carrying a lamb in his hands as if he were eating it, . . . and then others with different devices, one being in the figure of a dog with the Host in his mouth. They write that the Queen was so angry that she at once entered her chamber, using strong language, and the men who held the torches, it being night, left them in the dark, and so ended this thoughtless and scandalous representation."[1]

Amongst the long list of honorary Masters of Arts made on the occasion, Sir William Cecil was one, and on the journey to Cambridge he was honoured for the first of many times with a visit from the Queen to his house at Waltham, Theobalds,[2] which at this time was a small house he had recently built as a country retreat, not so remote as Burghley, or so near town as Wimbledon. It was his intention, even then, to leave this estate to his younger son; but, as will be shown later, it was not meant to be the magnificent place it afterwards became. The Queen's frequent visits, says his household biographer, forced him "to enlarge it, rather for the Queen and her great train, and to set the poor in order, than for pomp or glory, for he ever said it

[1] The official account makes no mention of this. It says only that great preparations had been made to represent Sophocles' tragedy of Ajax Flagellifer. "But her Highness, as it were, tyred with going about the colleges and hearing disputations, and overwatched with former plays, . . . could not, as otherwise no doubt she would, . . . hear the said tragedy, to the great sorrow not only of the players but of the whole University." If the scene as described by the Spaniard took place, it must have been at the house of Sir Henry Cromwell, the great Oliver's grandfather, at Hinchinbrook, where the Queen slept on the night of the day she left Cambridge.

[2] The Queen had, however, supped with him at his yet unfinished mansion in London—Cecil House—in 1560, and had there stood godmother to his infant daughter Elizabeth (6th July 1564).

would be too big for the small living he could leave his son. He greatly delighted in making gardens, fountains, and walks; which at Theobalds were perfected most costly, beautifully, and pleasantly, where one might walk two miles in the walk before he came to the end."[1] We are told that throughout the year at Theobalds, even in his absence, Cecil kept an establishment of twenty-six to thirty persons, at a cost of £12 a week. Every day twenty to thirty poor people were relieved at the gates, and "the weekly charge of setting the poor to work there, weeding, labouring in the gardens, &c., was £10"; whilst for many years 20s. every week was paid to the Vicar of Cheshunt, in which parish Theobalds stands, for the succour of the distressed parishioners.

Cecil was simple and sober in his own living and attire, but by his every act he demonstrates his ambition to be well regarded by the world, and his determination to fulfil what he considered decorous in a great personage who owed a duty to his ancestry, to his position, and to those who should inherit his honours. His letter of advice to the Earl of Bedford when the latter was appointed governor of Berwick (1564) sets forth in a few words his ideal of a *grand seigneur*, which might represent a portrait of himself. "Think of some great nobleman whom you can take as your pattern. . . . Weigh well what comes before you. Let your household be an example of order. Allow no excess of apparel, no disputes on Princes' affairs at table. Be hospitable, but avoid excess. Be impartial and easy of access. Do not favour lawyers without honesty. . . . Try to make country gentlemen agree:

[1] This splendid place, to which further reference will be made, was visited on his first voyage south by James I., who was so enamoured of it that he obtained it from the first Earl of Salisbury, Cecil's younger son, in exchange for Hatfield. It was at Theobalds that King James died.

take their sons as your servants, and train them in warlike and manly exercises, such as artillery, wrestling, &c."

The picture which Cecil presents of his own mind in his writings is consistently that of a judicious, cautious, acquisitive, and intensely proud and self-conscious man; a man eminently fair, especially to his inferiors, to whom it would be undignified to be otherwise; not wanting in courage, but by temperament more inclined to reduce an enemy's stronghold by sap and mine than by a storming attack; determined that he would stand, no matter who might fall, and yet not greedy or selfish for personal gratification; his mind monopolised by two main ideas, the greatness and prosperity of England, and the decorous dignity of his own house.

To attribute to him modern ideas with regard to liberty, as we now understand it, would be absurd. He was a man of great enlightenment, a lover of learning; but he was a statesman of his own age, not of ours. That England should be governed by nobles, and that he should help the Queen to guide the governors, was in the divine order of things. He would do, and did, according to his lights, the best he could for all men; but that the ordinary citizen should claim a voice in deciding what was best for himself would have appeared to Cecil Utopian nonsense to be punished as treason. He would be rigidly just, charitable, and forbearing to all; but if any but those on the same plane as himself should dream of claiming rights of equality, then impious blasphemy could hardly be too strong a term to apply to such insolence. With opinions such as those he undoubtedly held respecting the exclusive right of an aristocracy to govern, his own position would have been inconsistent if he had not claimed, as he did with almost suspicious vehemence, to belong by birth and descent to an ancient and noble race.

CHAPTER VII

1564–1566

THE efforts that had been made by the English Council to benefit native commerce had caused much apprehension amongst the Flemish merchants, who had for many years practically monopolised the English export trade. The English Company of Merchant-Adventurers had agitated and petitioned the Queen and Council to discountenance the foreign merchants; and as a result, a series of enactments was passed which gave considerable trade advantages to Englishmen. Differential duties, compulsory priority given to English bottoms for the export trade, the imposition of harassing disabilities and penalties on foreign merchants established in London, together with the great increase of piracy owing to the extensive shipbuilding of recent years in England, had greatly disorganised Flemish trade. During 1563 and early in 1564, several envoys had been sent from Spanish Flanders to endeavour to obtain a reversal of the new commercial policy, but without effect. This caused reprisals on the part of the Spanish Government, which prohibited the introduction of English cloth into Flanders and the exportation of raw material from Flanders to England, as well as the employment of English ships for Flemish exports. In retaliation, a more stringent order was issued in England forbidding trade with Flanders altogether, and the establishment of a new staple at Embden. The seizure of English goods and subjects in Spain itself was the answer to this. Natu-

rally, people on both sides suffered severely by this commercial warfare.[1] Emissaries went backwards and forwards between Flanders and England, partial relaxations were temporarily arranged, conferences were held; but the main difficulty continued until Antwerp was well-nigh ruined, and the Spaniards were obliged to humble themselves in order to prevent a commercial catastrophe. The day, indeed, had gone by now for hectoring England. The old Bishop of Aquila had died bankrupt, abandoned, and broken-hearted—Cecil's object-lesson of the impotence of Spain—and a very different Ambassador had been sent, whose main duty it was to keep Elizabeth friendly, and to end, at almost any cost, the commercial war which was ruining Flanders.

Guzman de Silva arrived in London in June 1564. He was amiable and courtly, flattered the Queen to the top of her bent, and was soon a prime favourite. At his first interview at Richmond she showed off her Latin and Italian, coyly led the talk to her personal appearance, blushingly hinted at love and marriage in general, Cecil being all the while close to her side.[2] As soon as the compliments and embraces were ended and Guzman was alone, a great friend of Dudley's sought him out with a message from the favourite, informing him "of the great enmity that exists between Cecil and Lord Robert, even before this book about the succession was published; but now very much more, as he believes Cecil to be the author of the book; and the Queen is extremely angry about it, although she signifies that there are so

[1] The details of, and correspondence with relation to this commercial war, with the various negotiations, and especially those of the conference of Bruges, will be found in the Hatfield Papers, correspondence of the Merchant-Adventurers, Foreign Papers, correspondence of Valentine Dale, Sheres, &c., and in the B. M. Add. MSS., 28,173, correspondence of Dassonleville and other Flemish agents, as well as in Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, vol. i.

[2] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, vol. i.

many accomplices in the offence that they must overlook it, and has begun to slacken in the matter.[1] The person has asked me with great secrecy to take an opportunity of speaking to the Queen (or to make such an opportunity), to urge her without fail to adopt strong measures in this business; because if Cecil were out of the way, the affairs of your Majesty would be more favourably dealt with, and religious questions as well; for this Cecil and his friends are those who persecute the Catholics and dislike your Majesty, whereas the other man (*i.e.* Dudley) is looked upon as faithful, and the rest of the Catholics so consider him, and have adopted him as their weapon. If the Queen would consent to disgrace Cecil, it would be a great good to them, and this man tried to persuade me to make use of Robert."[2] Guzman was cautious, for he knew what had happened to his predecessor; but this will show that Dudley was determined to stick at nothing to destroy, if possible, the man who, almost alone, was the obstacle to his ambition. He was liberal in his professions and promises to the Spaniard, whom he urged to ask for audience as much as possible through him, instead of through Cecil. His friends assured Guzman that he still expected to marry the

[1] The book in question was that written by John Hales, Clerk of the Hanaper, in favour of the succession of Lady Catharine Grey and her children. He had been indicted in January 1564 for "presumptuously and contemptuously discussing, both by words and in writing, the question of the succession to the imperial crown of England, in case the Queen should die without issue;" and thenceforward for months interrogatories and depositions with regard to his sayings and doings, and those of Catharine Grey and her husband, Lord Hertford, continued before Cecil without intermission. (The papers in the case are all at Hatfield, and are mostly published *in extenso* by Haynes.) Hales himself was the scapegoat, and was in the Fleet prison for six months; but in all probability, as Dudley said, Cecil and his brother-in-law, Bacon, had a great share in drawing up the book. Cecil was probably too powerful and useful to touch; but Bacon was reprimanded, and Lord John Grey of Pyrgo, an old friend of Cecil's, was kept under arrest until his death, a few months later.

[2] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, vol. i.

Queen, and had an understanding with the Pope; that the Catholic religion would be restored in England if the marriage were brought about, and much more to the same effect.[1]

The reason for this new move on the part of Dudley is not very far to seek. The defection of Condé and the collapse of the Protestants in France had been seized upon by Cardinal Lorraine and the dominant Catholics to force Catharine de Medici into a renewal of the negotiations for a league with Philip to extirpate Protestantism. Already the meeting had been arranged between Catharine and her daughter, the Queen of Spain, at Bayonne, which was to cement the close alliance. Catholicism was everywhere in the ascendant, and the clouds appeared to be gathering over England; for there was no combination so threatening for her as this. Hitherto Cecil had always counted upon the jealousy between France and Spain to prevent the domination of England by either power; but with the French Protestants prostrate and a close union between a Guisan France and Catholic Spain, all safeguards would disappear, and Mary Stuart would be able to count upon the support of the whole Catholic world, in which case the position of Elizabeth and the Anglican Church was, indeed, a critical one.

As we have seen, Dudley cared nothing for all this, even if he was able to appreciate its gravity. If he could only force or cajole the Queen to marry him, the religion of England might be anything his supporters chose. He knew well that Cecil, with his broad and moderate views,

[1] Philip's reply, partly in his own hand, to his Ambassador's reports of Dudley's offers is characteristic: "I am pleased to see what Lord Robert says, and will tell you my will on the point. I am much dissatisfied with Cecil, as he is such a heretic; and if you give such encouragement to Robert as will enable him to put his foot on Cecil and turn him out of office, I shall be very glad. But you must do it with such tact and delicacy, that if it fails, none shall know that you had a hand in it" (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, vol. i.).

would try to conjure away the danger and disarm Catholic Spain, whilst safeguarding religion, by again bringing forward the Archduke with some sort of compact founded on the Lutheran compromise in Germany. But Spain and the Catholics, though they might have accepted such a solution, were not enthusiastic about it; and Dudley, by going the whole length and promising Spain everything, thought to outbid Cecil and spoil the Archduke's chance, whilst diverting Spanish support from Mary Stuart to himself.

In the autumn of 1563 the Duke of Wurtemburg, at the prompting of the English agent, had approached the Emperor to propose a renewal of the Archduke's negotiation. Ferdinand was cool: nominally the first monarch in Christendom, and a son of the proud House of Austria, he did not relish being taken up and dropped again as often as suited English politics, and he demanded all sorts of assurances before he would act. The Duke of Wurtemburg secretly sent an agent to see Cecil early in 1564 without the Emperor's knowledge, and satisfied himself that Elizabeth was neither a Calvinist nor a Zwinglian, and would accept the confession of Augsburg. This was satisfactory; but before anything more could be done, Ferdinand died (July 1564). When he conveyed the news to Cecil, Mundt, the English agent, proposed that he should be allowed to reopen the question of marriage with the new Emperor Maximilian, through the Duke of Wurtemburg. "He" (Mundt) "knows," he says, "that the Queen is so modest and virtuous that she will not do anything that shall seem like seeking a husband. But as the matter is most vital to the whole Christian world, he thinks that Cecil should not be restrained by any narrow and untimely modesty; for he, holding the administration of the kingdom, ought to strive to preserve the tranquillity thereof by insuring a perpetual succession."

Cecil and Mundt understood each other thoroughly; but the Secretary's answer was intended for the eyes of others, and was cautious. "With regard to her Majesty's inclinations on the subject of her marriage, he can with certainty say nothing; than that he perceives that she would rather marry a foreign than a native prince, and that the more distinguished the suitor is by birth, power, and personal attractions, the better hope he will have of success. Moreover, he cannot deny that the nobleman who, with them, excites considerable expectation, to wit Lord Robert, is worthy to become the husband of the Queen. The fact of his being her Majesty's subject, however, will prove a serious objection to him in her estimation. Nevertheless, his virtues and his excellent and heroic gifts of mind and body have so endeared him to the Queen, that she could not regard her own brother with greater affection. From which they who do not know the Queen intimately, conjecture that he will be her future husband. He, however, sees and understands that she merely takes delight in his virtues and rare qualities, and that nothing is more discussed in their conversation than that which is most consistent with virtue, and furthest removed from all unworthy sentiments." It is not surprising that Cecil has endorsed the draft of this letter, "written to Mr. Mundt by the Queen's command."

Mundt worked hard, but there were many obstacles in the way. Wurtemburg was in no hurry. The mourning for the late Emperor, and the plague which raged in Germany, delayed matters for months. Once in the interval Cecil wrote to ask Mundt whether it was true that the Archduke's neck was awry. Mundt could not deny the impeachment, but softened it like a courtier. "Alexander the Great had his neck bent towards the left side; would that our man may be his imitator in magnanimity

and bravery. His body is elegant and middle size, more well grown and robust than the Spanish Prince."[1]

In the autumn Elizabeth sent an envoy to condole with the new Emperor on the death of his father, and simultaneously lost no opportunity of drawing closer to Spain. She coquetted with Guzman, ostentatiously in the face of the French Ambassador. She spoke sentimentally of old times, when her brother-in-law Philip was in England. She was curious to know whether Don Carlos was grown, and manly; and then apparently to force the Ambassador's hand, she sighed that every one disdained her, and that she heard Don Carlos was to marry the Queen of Scots. Guzman earnestly said that the Prince had been ill, and that such a thing was quite out of the question; which was perfectly true. The Queen's real object then came out. "Why," she said, "the gossips in London were saying that the Ambassador had been sent by the King of Spain to offer his son Don Carlos to me!" All this rather undignified courting of Spain succeeded very soon in arousing the jealousy of France, as it was intended to do.

De Foix, the French Ambassador, had kept Catharine de Medici well informed of affairs in England. Catharine was already getting alarmed at being bound hand and foot to the Guises, the Catholics, and Philip. The plan of marrying Mary Stuart to Don Carlos, or his cousin, the Archduke, and the rallying of Leicester to Spain and the Catholics, threatened to dwarf the influence of France, and make Spain irresistible. So the Queen-mother began to hint to Sir Thomas Smith, the Ambassador, that a marriage would be desirable between her son Charles IX., aged fifteen, and Queen Elizabeth, aged thirty-one. Some such suggestion had been made by Condé to Smith during the negotiations which preceded

[1] Hatfield Papers, part i.

the evacuation of Havre, but it had not been regarded seriously. It was probably no more serious now, but it was the trump card of both Queens, and it served its purpose.

In the meanwhile the plot of Leicester and the Catholics against Cecil went on. The English Catholics came to Guzman, and represented to him that it would be better not to come to any arrangement with the Government about the commercial question, in order that public discontent in England might ripen and an overturn of the present regime be made the easier. But the Flemings were suffering even more than the English from the interruption of trade, and Guzman had strict orders to obtain a settlement of the dispute. So he told the Catholics that the Queen had been obliged to hold her hand, and refrain from punishing Cecil and Bacon, until she had come to an understanding with Philip, and with the English Catholics, through him. She would cling to Cecil and his gang, said Guzman, so long as she thought she had anything to fear from Spain. "All people think that the only remedy for the religious trouble is to get these people turned out of power, as they are the mainstay of the heretics, Lord Robert having the Catholics all on his side."[1] Dudley was flattered and encouraged with messages and promises from Philip, and laboured incessantly to get rid of Cecil, even for a short time.

In order, apparently, to forward Dudley's chances of success as a suitor for the hand of Mary Stuart, for which at this time Elizabeth pretended to be anxious, she created him Earl of Leicester and Baron Denbeigh, on Michaelmas day 1564. De Foix, the French Ambassador, intimated two days previously his intention of being present at the splendid festivities which accompanied the ceremony. This was a good opportunity for Cecil to arouse suspicion of the new Earl, and distrust of

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, vol. i.

the French. On the 28th September, accordingly, the Secretary called upon Guzman, and telling him that the French Ambassador would be present at the feast, hinted that Dudley was very friendly with the French; to which the Spaniard replied, that he had always understood that such was the case, and that Dudley's father was known to be much attached to them. Then "Cecil told me that the Queen had commanded him to visit the Emperor with Throgmorton, and although he had done all in his power to excuse himself from the journey, he had not succeeded. I understand that the artfulness of his rivals has procured this commission for him, in order, in the meantime, to put some one else in his place, which certainly would be a good thing. His wife has petitioned the Queen to let her husband stay at home, as he is weak and delicate. They tell me that this has made the business doubtful, and I do not know for certain what will be done; nor indeed is anything sure here from one hour to another, except the hatching of falsehoods, which always goes on." Needless to say, Cecil had his way and did not go.

Before many days had passed Leicester sent to Guzman disclaiming any particular friendship with the French, "and said, after his own Queen, there was no prince in the world whom he was so greatly obliged to serve as your Majesty, whose servant he had been, and to whom he owed his life and all he had." De Foix, he said, had only been present at his feast, because he brought him the Order of St. Michael from the King of France, which he (Leicester) did not wish to accept. Guzman was rather tart about the business, and reminded Leicester's friend (Spinola) that on the same day that the Queen had invited him (Guzman) to supper, De Foix had dined with her; and when Spinola hinted that Philip might send Leicester the Golden Fleece,

Guzman was quite scandalised at the idea of conferring the order on any one not a "publicly professed Catholic." Altogether it is clear that the Queen's and Cecil's clever management was already setting the French and Spanish by the ears; and when they could do that and make them rivals for England's favour, she was safe.

The next day Guzman was entertained at dinner by Leicester, the Earl of Warwick, Cecil, and others being present; and the Secretary in the course of conversation assured the Spaniard that he was taking vigorous measures to suppress the depredations on shipping, and to restore as much as possible of the merchandise stolen. Already, indeed, Cecil's diplomacy was righting matters. An active correspondence was going on about the Archduke's match; the Queen assured Guzman that she had to conceal her real feelings about religion, but that God knew her heart; and even Cecil tried to soften the asperity of the Catholics towards him. "Cecil," writes Guzman to his King, "tells these heretical bishops to look after their clergy, as the Queen is determined to reform them in their customs, and even in their dress, as the diversity that exists in everything cannot be tolerated.[1] He directs that they should be

[1] This refers to the order issued shortly before, called "Advertisements for the due order of the administration of the Holy Sacrament, and for the apparel of all persons ecclesiastical"; which commenced the bitter "vestments controversy."

An interesting series of returns from the bishops, of this date (October 1564) is at Hatfield. Their lordships had been directed to make reports of the persons of note in their respective dioceses, classified under the heads of "favourers of true religion," "adversaries of true religion," and "neutrals." To the reports the bishops append their recommendations for reform. The Bishop of Hereford says that all his canons residentiary "ar but dissemblers and rancke papists." He suggests that all those who will not conform should be expelled; and most of his episcopal brethren advocate even stronger measures than these. Another paper of this time (1564) addressed to Cecil, and printed by Strype in his "Life of Parker," shows the remarkable diversity of the service in English churches. As will be seen later, Cecil's attitude on the great vestment question divided him from many of his Protestant friends.

careful how they treat those of the old faith: to avoid calumniating them or persecuting or harrying them." The result of this action was that in October 1564, Guzman could write: "I have advised previously that Cecil's favour had been wavering, but he knows how to please, and avoids saying things the Queen does not wish to hear; and, above all, as I am told, can flatter her, so he has kept his place, and things are now in the same condition as formerly. Robert makes the best of it. The outward demonstrations are fair, but the inner feelings the same as before. I do not know how long they will last. They dissemble; but Cecil has more wit than all of them. Their envy of him is very great."[1]

Sir James Melvil, a Scotsman brought up in France, was directed to go to London in the autumn of 1564, to watch his mistress's interests. To him Elizabeth again suggested a marriage between Dudley and "her good sister"; and in reply to his remark that Mary thought that a conference between English and Scottish statesmen should discuss the question first, at which conference the Earl of Bedford and Lord Robert could represent England, Elizabeth told Melvil that he seemed to make a small account of Lord Robert. He should, she said, see him made a far greater Earl than Bedford before he left court. When Dudley was on his knees, shortly afterwards, receiving the investiture of his Earldom, the Queen tickled his neck, and asked Melvil what he thought of him. Melvil gave a courtly answer, whereupon the Queen retorted that he liked that "long lad" (Darnley) better. Melvil scoffed at such an idea, but his main object in coming to England was to intrigue for the "long lad's" permission to go to Scotland. A few days after this, Leicester took

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.

Melvil in his barge from Hampton Court to London, and on the way asked him what Mary thought of the marriage with him, which Randolph had proposed to her. Melvil answered coldly, as his mistress had instructed him to do. "Then he began to purge himself of so proud a pretence as to marry so great a Queen, declaring he did not esteem himself worthy to wipe her shoes; declaring that the invention of that proposition of marriage proceeded from Mr. Cecil, his secret enemy. For if I, says he, should have appeared desirous of that marriage, I should have offended both the Queens and lost their favour." [1]

Melvil went back to Scotland with all manner of kind messages for his mistress; and Cecil especially was gracious to him, placing a fine gold chain around his neck as he bade him farewell. But when Mary asked her envoy if he thought Elizabeth "meant truly towards her inwardly in her heart, as she appeared to do outwardly in her speech," he replied that in his judgment "there was neither plain dealing nor upright meaning; but great dissimulation, emulation, envy, and fear lest her princely qualities should chase her from the kingdom, as having already hindered her marriage with the Archduke. It appeared likewise to me, by her offering unto her, with great apparent earnestness, my Lord of Leicester." Melvil says that Leicester's humble and artful letters to Mary, and the consequent kindness of the latter, aroused Elizabeth's fear that after all Mary might marry her favourite, and caused her to consent to Darnley's visit to Scotland.[2] "Which licence," he says, "was pro-

[1] Memoirs of Sir James Melvil of Hallhill.

[2] Bedford and Maitland subsequently met at Berwick to discuss the proposed match. It suited Mary to pretend some willingness to take Leicester in order to obtain leave for Darnley to come to Scotland. She was probably right in supposing that finally Elizabeth did not mean to allow Leicester to marry the Scottish Queen. Cecil was of the same opinion. Writing to his

cured by means of Secretary Cecil, not that he was minded that any of the marriages should take effect, but with such shifts to hold the Queen (Mary) unmarried as long as he could, persuading himself that Lord Darnley durst not proceed in the marriage without consent of the Queen of England first obtained."[1] Cecil's task was again an extremely difficult one. He had to keep up an appearance of leaning to the Catholics and the House of Austria, and encourage the idea of Elizabeth's marriage with the Archduke, in order to prevent the alliance of Mary Stuart with so powerful an interest; he was obliged to keep his own restive Protestant friends in hand; to counteract at every step the intrigues of Leicester against him, and to be ready at any moment to cause a diversion if Leicester's suit to the Queen looked too serious to be safe.

The replies and recommendations of the bishops to the Council's circular, referred to in a previous note (page 160), had caused much apprehension amongst Catholics; and the Queen herself, as well as Cecil, assured Guzman that the bishops should do the Catholics no harm; whilst, on the other hand, Cecil's Protestant friends were urging him to adopt strong measures to prevent the growth of the "Papists." Cecil's reply to one such recommendation shows that he was just as ready to wound Leicester underhand as Leicester was him. "He replied that he was doing what he could, but he did not know who was at the Queen's ear to soften her so, and render her less zealous in this than she ought to be."[2]

Cecil's greatest difficulty, indeed, at this time, was from

friend Smith at the end of December 1564 (Lansdowne MSS., 102), he says, "I see her Majesty very desyroose to have my L. of Leicester placed in this high degree to be the Scottish Queen's husband, but when it cometh to the conditions which are demanded I see her then remiss of her earnestness."

[1] Melvil's Memoirs.

[2] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, vol. i.

Leicester, who had now quite enlisted Sir Nicholas Throgmorton against his former friend. In order to enable Leicester with some decency to accept the Order of St. Michael, Throgmorton suggested that the Queen might ask for another Cross of the Order to be given to the Duke of Norfolk. When Cecil learned this, he was obliged to remonstrate with the Queen, and point out how undesirable it was in the present state of affairs to place two of her most powerful nobles under an obligation to France. At a time when Cecil was straining every nerve to keep on good terms with the House of Austria, and conciliating the Catholics, in order to checkmate Mary Stuart, Leicester had agents running backwards and forwards to France, in the hope of bringing forward in an official form the farcical offer of Charles IX.'s hand for the Queen, which offer he knew would come to nothing, whilst rendering abortive the Archduke's suit, upon which Cecil depended to so great an extent.

The dexterity and cleverness of Cecil under these circumstances is shown very markedly in the manner in which he changed in a very few months the opinion of the Spanish Ambassador about him, as soon as his policy rendered it necessary to gain his good opinion. "When I first arrived here," writes Guzman, January 2, 1565, "I imagined Secretary Cecil . . . to be very different from what I have found him in your Majesty's affairs. He is well disposed towards them, truthful, lucid, modest, and just; and although he is zealous in serving his Queen, which is one of his best traits, yet he is amenable to reason. He knows the French, and, like an Englishman, is their enemy. He assured me on his oath . . . that the French have always made great efforts to attract to their country the Flanders trade (*i.e.* with England). With regard to his religion I say nothing, except that I wish he were a Catholic . . . but he is straightforward,

and shows himself well affected towards your Majesty . . . for he alone it is who makes or mars business here."[1]

Having thus gained the good-will of the Spaniard, Cecil was soon able to persuade him that the Queen would never really marry Leicester, and the relations between the latter and the Spaniards became cooler. The Queen herself could not do enough to show her kindness to Guzman, and at joust, tournament, and ball, chatted with him in preference to the French Ambassador. By January 1565, Leicester, seeing that Cecil's diplomacy had gained the good-will of Spain, and that the Catholics were turning to the side of the Archduke, unblushingly veered round to the French interest.

Guzman was obliged then to write that he was not at all satisfied with him. He wished, he said, to please everybody; but was getting very friendly with the French, who were making much of him. But there was more even than this. The Queen and Cecil were trying their best to please the Catholics. The Queen openly and rudely rebuked Dean Nowell at his sermon on Ash Wednesday for attacking Catholic practices; whilst Cecil was pushing the Vestments Order to the very verge of safety. Some of the bishops invited him to a conference, and remonstrated with him on the severity of the new regulations, which they openly stigmatised as papistical. He told them sternly that the Queen's order must be obeyed, or worse would befall them. The churchmen of the Geneva school railed and resisted, as far as they might,[2] what

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.

[2] Humphrey and Sampson, both eminent divines and friends of Cecil, amongst others, stood out. The former, after much hesitation, was forced into obedience; but the latter was dismissed from his deanery of Christ Church (Strype's "Annals"). The students and masters of Cecil's own College of St. John gave him as Chancellor much trouble by refusing to wear their surplices and hoods. After much correspondence and remonstrance with them, the Chancellor became really angry, and the students assumed a humbler attitude.

they called the Secretary's backsliding; whilst Leicester, ever willing to change sides, if he could only checkmate Cecil, vigorously took the part of the Puritans, and did his best to hamper the execution of the Vestments Order, and to prevent the use of the cross on the altars.[1]

In February 1565, De Foix, the French Ambassador, shot the bolt that had long been forging. He saw Elizabeth in her presence-chamber, and, after much exaggerated compliment, read a letter of Catharine de Medici, saying she would be the happiest of mothers if her dearly beloved sister Queen Elizabeth would marry her son, and become a daughter to her. "She would find in the young King," she said, "both bodily and mentally, that which would please her." This was very sweet incense to Elizabeth, and she sentimentally deplored that she was not ten years younger. De Foix flattered her, and tranquillised her fears that she would be neglected or abandoned, and the Queen agreed with him to keep the matter secret for the present, and promised him a speedy reply.[2] As usual, Cecil drew up for the Queen's guidance a judicial examination of the advantages and disadvantages which might be expected from the marriage. He is careful in this lucid document not to commit himself to an individual opinion,[3] but the formidable list of objections far outweigh the advantages; and when the Queen the next day repeated Cecil's arguments as her own, De Foix lost patience, hinted that his mistress had been deceived, and would withdraw the offer.[4] Elizabeth petted the ruffled diplomatist into a good humour again, and said she would send Cecil to talk the matter over with him.

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, vol. i.
[2] *Dépêches de De Foix, Bibliothèque Nationale.*
[3] Foreign State Papers.
[4] *Dépêches de De Foix, Bibliothèque Nationale.*

Leicester had been bribed heavily by the French, and pretended to be strongly in favour of the match, which he knew would never take place, but might choke off the Archduke. But with Cecil it was very different. He had no objection to the French suit being talked about: that might make Spain and the Austrians more tractable; but if it was allowed to go too far, the Emperor would take umbrage, and the Spaniards would balance matters by marrying Mary Stuart to some nominee of their own. When, consequently, Cecil saw De Foix, he was cool and argumentative, talked much of the difficulties of the match; and on De Foix suggesting that such a union with France would preserve England from danger, he replied that England could defend herself, and had nothing to fear. By these tactics he avoided a direct negative, delayed and procrastinated, whilst his agents were busy in Germany smoothing the way for the Archduke. The French matter was a strict secret, but the Queen could not avoid giving some very broad hints about it to her friend Guzman. When he objected that the young King would be a very little husband for her, she angled dexterously but ineffectually to extort an offer of marriage from Don Carlos. Catharine de Medici was just as eager as Elizabeth[1] that the negotiations for

[1] Castelnau de la Mauvissière was in London in May 1565 on his way to France from Scotland, and gives, in a letter to the Queen-mother, a most entertaining account of a conversation with Elizabeth at a night garden-party given by Leicester in his honour (the letter itself is in a private collection, but is printed in Chéruel's *Marie Stuart et Catharine de Medici*). She said how much more popular in England Frenchmen were than Spaniards; praised the young King as "the greatest and most virtuous prince on earth." She asked Castelnau whether he would be vexed if she married the King. "Although she had nothing," she said, "worthy of so great a match: nothing but a little realm, her goodness and her chastity, on which point at least she could hold her own against any maiden in the world," and much more to the same effect. Castelnau says he never saw her look so pretty as she did. Catharine took the hint, and her industrious approaches to Smith were largely prompted by Elizabeth's coquetry to Castelnau on this occasion.

the marriage with Charles IX. should not be dropped, for she was getting seriously afraid now of the Catholic combination into which she had been drawn, and industriously plied Smith with arguments in favour of the match. But Smith knew as well as Cecil himself that the whole matter was a feint, and dexterously avoided giving a favourable opinion. The Huguenots, however, were in deadly earnest about it, and Elizabeth and Catharine contrived to carry on the farce intermittently until eventually Charles IX. was betrothed to a daughter of the Emperor.

Elizabeth was barely off with the old love than Adam Swetkowitz, Baron Mitterburg, came on behalf of the new. Ostensibly his mission was to return the late Emperor's insignia of the Garter, but really every step to be taken by him had been previously agreed upon through Throgmorton, Roger Le Strange, Baron Preyner, Mundt, and the Duke of Wurtemburg. The Spanish Ambassador, however, had been studiously kept in the dark until shortly before Swetkowitz's arrival, and was not in a hurry to pledge his master in the Archduke's favour, until he learned what arrangements had been made about religion. On the contrary, he first approached Leicester, who was ill in consequence of an accident, and secretly urged him to press his suit before the Emperor's envoy appeared. Leicester was doubtful, but still not quite without hope. When Swetkowitz actually arrived, Leicester understood that the current was too powerful for him to oppose at first, and he became strongly and ostentatiously in favour of the Austrian match. Swetkowitz first saw the Queen at the beginning of June. Her people, she said, were urging her to marry, and she was anxious to hear whether the King of Spain would favour the Archduke's suit for her hand. This Swet-

kowitz could not tell her; and he was referred to Cecil for further discussion of details.

The conditions as laid down by Cecil[1] were prudent and moderate, but certainly not likely to commend themselves to the King of Spain, or even to the Emperor; for no power was to be given to the Consort, and the question of religion was jealously safeguarded. It is evident that the German thought that Leicester might be made instrumental in modifying these conditions. He writes to the Emperor, "Since the principal promoter of this transaction will be the illustrious Earl of Leicester, who is most devoted to the Archduke, and is loved by the Queen with a sincere and most chaste and honest love, I think your Majesty and the Archduke would aid the business by addressing fraternal letters to the Earl."[2] But Leicester's momentary adhesion to the policy of Cecil, Sussex, and Norfolk, was only for the purpose of deceiving the Secretary, and putting him off his guard. Whilst Cecil was proceeding in good faith with Swetkowitz, and the latter, a Lutheran, was just as earnest in his efforts to bring about the marriage, both the Queen and Leicester were playing a double game. Probably Elizabeth's marriage with her favourite was never nearer than at this juncture, when she was carrying on a serious negotiation with the Austrian, and was still making an appearance of dallying with De Foix. The circumstances, indeed, were for the moment all in favour of Leicester. Guzman was very cool about the Archduke

[1] Hatfield Papers, *in extenso* in Haynes.

[2] Cecil writes to Smith, 3rd June 1565 (Lansdowne MSS., 102). "My Lord of Lecester furdereth the Quene's Majesty with all good reasons to take one of these great princes, wherein surely perceaving his own course not sperable, he doth honourably and wisely. I see few noblemen devoted to France; but I being *Mancipum Reginæ*, and lackyng witt for to expend so great a matter, will follow with service where hir Majesty will goo before." This attitude is very characteristic of the writer.

and the Lutheran envoy. The Queen was for ever trying to ascertain Philip's feeling about the Archduke, and at the same time dragging Leicester's name into her complicated conversational puzzles with the Spaniard. The latter on one occasion, disbelieving her sincerity about the Archduke, urged her to marry his friend Leicester, if she married a subject; and only a day or two afterwards De Foix, who had by this time lost all hope of success for Charles IX., and wished to checkmate the Austrian, also went and pleaded Leicester's suit. The Earl, thus having the good word both of the Spanish and French Ambassadors, could afford to grow cool on the Austrian match.[1] Cecil, and Sussex particularly, were scandalised and apprehensive at this new instance of Leicester's falseness, and laboured desperately to bring the Archduke to England to force the Queen's hand. But the Emperor was slow and doubtful about the religious conditions, and would not risk a loss of dignity.

Matters thus dragged on month after month, whilst Leicester's chances looked brighter and brighter. Among the principal reasons for the rising hopes of Leicester were the events which had happened in Scotland during the previous few months. After much apparent hesitation, Elizabeth had in February granted to Darnley

[1] There is an enigmatical entry in Cecil's journal at this period, August 1565, saying, "The Queene's Majestie seemed to be much offended with the Earle of Leicester, and so she wrote an obscure sentence in a book at Windsor." Strype, who has been followed by most other historians, thought that this referred to Leicester's opposition to the Archduke's suit. The real reason for the Queen's squabble with Leicester is given by Guzman (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, vol. i.). August 27: "I wrote to your Majesty that the Queen was showing favour to one Heneage, who serves in her chamber. Lord Robert and he have had words, and as a consequence Robert spoke to the Queen about it. She was apparently much annoyed at the conversation. . . . Heneage at once left the court, and Robert did not see the Queen for three days, until she sent for him. They say now that Heneage will come back at the instance of Lord Robert, to avoid gossip."

permission to join his father in Scotland for three months. A few weeks later a messenger came from Mary Stuart to the Spanish Ambassador in London, asking him whether he had any reply to send to her. Guzman was cautious, for he did not quite know the meaning of this; but said he would speak to Maitland of Lethington, who was then on the way to London from the Border. Simultaneously with this, Lady Margaret Lennox also approached Guzman. "She told me the kind treatment her son had received at the hands of the Queen of Scots, and that the French Ambassador had sent to her secretly offering all his support for the marriage of her son. But she knows the French way of dealing . . . and repeats that she and her children have no other refuge but your Majesty (Philip), and begs me to address your Majesty in their favour, in case the Queen of Scotland should choose to negotiate about her son, Darnley, or in the event of the death of this Queen, that they may look to your Majesty." When Maitland arrived in London in April, he saw Guzman in secret, and after some fencing and feigned ignorance, offered his mistress's adhesion and submission to Spain. His mistress, he said, had waited for Philip's answer about Don Carlos for two years, but had now listened to some proposals for a marriage with Darnley, as neither Elizabeth nor her own subjects wished her to marry a foreigner. But before concluding the affair she wished to know if there was still any hope of her obtaining Don Carlos, in which case she still preferred that alliance. Guzman replied that, as Cardinal Lorraine had gone so far in his negotiations for the marriage with the Archduke Charles, Philip had abandoned all idea of opposing him by bringing forward his own son Carlos. Maitland assured him that the negotiations of Cardinal Lorraine were carried on against Mary's wish, and in

the interests of France; but Guzman knew now that the match with Don Carlos was hopeless, and said so. Maitland then spoke of the Darnley marriage, which, however, he feared would be very dangerous if Elizabeth took it badly. All would be well, he said, if the King of Spain would take Mary and Darnley under his protection; but beyond bland banalities he could get nothing from Guzman.[1]

Darnley's demeanour in Scotland, and Mary's behaviour towards him, together with the rising hopes of the Catholics there, had alarmed Murray and his friends; and Elizabeth and her Council were now also alive to their danger. Cecil drew up one of his pro and contra reports with regard to the influence that such a marriage would have on England,[2] which was submitted to the Council, and a unanimous condemnation of the match was adopted, and Throgmorton was sent in May post-haste to Scotland to dissuade Mary from taking a step so threatening to Elizabeth. Randolph's letters to Cecil at the time showed that the danger was a real one. Darnley, he says, is a furious fool, and Mary was infatuated with him. To the Pope, to Philip, to Cardinal de Granvelle, and to Guzman, Mary made no secret that her object was to unite the Catholics and claim the crown of England; and Lady Margaret had from the first admitted that this was her aim in promoting the marriage of her son. When Elizabeth's eyes were opened to the imminence of the peril, she did what she could to stay the match. She, De Foix, and Throgmorton again pressed Leicester's marriage with Mary, Murray and his Protestant friends were encouraged to resist, Lady Margaret was placed under arrest in the Tower, Darnley was ordered to return to England, and

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, vol. i.
[2] Harl. MSS., 6990.

the Queen promised Maitland that if his mistress would marry to her liking she would acknowledge her right of succession to the English crown. Meanwhile rumours came thickly from Scotland that Mary was already married, Philip promised all his support to Mary and Darnley if they would be his faithful servants, Murray and Lethington were thrust into the background, Rizzio was ever at Mary's side, and her foolish young English lover, hated and contemned for his arrogance, urged his infatuated bride to the religious intolerance that led to her ruin.[1]

The remonstrances of Throgmorton and Randolph, and the letters of the Queen and Cecil, were as powerless to move Mary now as was the threatening attitude of her nobles and people, for she had decided to depend entirely upon Philip, and to defy the Queen of England. In July, a few days before her marriage, she sent a special messenger to Guzman with letters for Philip. "begging for help and favour against the Queen of England, who has raised her subjects against her, to force her to forsake the Catholic religion."[2] Murray, Argyll, and the Hamiltons, she says, are in revolt, and if aid do not come from Spain she will be lost.

When Mary's marriage was known for certain in London, the Archduke's suit was being laboriously discussed; but almost immediately afterwards, the renewed hopes of Leicester already referred to were noticed. It was felt that, now that Mary's marriage to a subject had taken place, one of Elizabeth's principal reasons for contracting an alliance with a son of the House of Austria disappeared, and a precedent had been set for her marriage with a man not belonging to a sovereign house.

Swetkowitz therefore found that he had to encounter

[1] Randolph to Cecil, 3rd June. Harl. MSS., 4645.
[2] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth, vol. i.

all manner of new conditions and demands from the Queen, which drove him to despair, and Guzman looked upon the Austrian's chance as a very poor one indeed. The Earl of Sussex and Cecil did their best to keep the matter afoot, whilst Leicester and Throgmorton openly proclaimed the hollowness of the whole negotiation. The old Earl of Arundel asked Guzman to dinner at Nonsuch early in August, apparently for the purpose of dissociating the English Catholics from the intrigues of both parties. He assured the Spaniard "that the men who surrounded the Queen did not wish her to marry. I said it was quite possible that some of them who thought they might get the prize for themselves might wish to hinder it; but as for Secretary Cecil, I thought that his disagreement with Robert (Leicester) might well lead him to support the Archduke, if it were not for the question of religion. He (Arundel) told me not to believe that Cecil wanted the Queen to marry. He was ambitious and fond of ruling, and liked everything to pass through his hands, and if the Queen had a husband he would have to obey him." This view of the matter is not improbable; but it is certain that Cecil, in any case, would resist to the last the marriage of the Queen with Leicester, under the patronage of either France or Spain. Such a marriage would have imperilled the results of his strenuous labour, and would have thrown England back into the slough from which the Queen and he had rescued it.

When Leicester's star was seen to be in the ascendant, and the Archduke's chance waned, Cecil and his friends once more revived the suit of the King of Sweden. Splendid presents of sables and valuable plate came to the Queen and her court; and Eric's romantic sister Cecilia, Margravine of Baden, again made ready for her much-desired visit to England,

where she arrived early in September. At the watergate of Durham House, where she lodged as the Queen's guest, Leicester's opponents were assembled in force to bid her welcome. The Countess of Sussex, Lady Bacon, Lady Cecil, and Cecil himself, all did honour to the Swedish King's sister, and Elizabeth was overwhelming in her cordiality for the first royal visitor she had entertained since her accession; but the Princess wore out her welcome, and nothing came of her visit, though it served its purpose of again spoiling the appearance of Leicester's chances for a time.

In the meanwhile, English money and men were supporting Murray and the Protestant Lords against Mary and Darnley, who were sending emissaries to the Pope, to Cardinal Lorraine, to Flanders, and to Philip, begging for help for the faith. When Elizabeth was remonstrated with by Guzman, De Foix, and Mauvissière, for helping rebels against their Queen, and for her harsh treatment of Lady Margaret, she replied that she had been shamefully deceived, but what she was doing was to endeavour to rescue Mary from the hands of her enemies, into which she had fallen, and she blamed Darnley and his Catholic friends more than Mary. The same excuse, said Guzman, which she used when she helped the French rebel Huguenots. At the end of September a special meeting of the full Council was held, at which Cecil set forth the position with regard to Scotland, and the policy it was proposed to adopt. He pointed out the many reasons that existed for distrusting the French, who were very busy in Scottish affairs since Mary's marriage;[1] and he told the Council that Mary had sent

[1] The action of the French representatives was extremely perplexing. On the one hand, they offered help to Elizabeth against Scotland, and urged Mary to make terms with Murray; whilst on the other, they continued to intercede with Elizabeth for Lady Margaret and Mary, and conveyed the kindest messages to the Queen and Darnley. (See Randolph's letters.)

Darnley's secretary, Yaxley,[1] to beg aid of Philip, in addition to the letters sent through Guzman, and to the Pope. The interference of the Catholic powers in Scotland, he said, was a menace to England; and it was decided that all preparations should be made for war upon the Border, as a measure of precaution, whilst an embassy was sent from England to endeavour to effect a reconciliation between Mary and the Protestant Lords.

Before any decided steps could be taken, however, Murray retired into England, and arrived in London on the 22nd October. The Queen affected anger, and received him sternly in the presence of her Council and of the French Ambassador. Murray was dressed in deep mourning, and entered humbly. Kneeling, he addressed the Queen in Scots. She told him to speak in French, which he said he understood but imperfectly. Notwithstanding this, she addressed to him a long harangue in French, for the edification of De Foix and Mauvissière. "God preserve her," she said, "from helping rebels, especially against one whom she had regarded as a sister." She understood that their rising was in consequence of the Queen's marriage without the consent of Parliament, and of fear that their religious liberty would be infringed. But if she thought he, Murray, had planned anything against his sovereign, she would at once arrest and punish him. Murray justified himself, and threw himself upon her generosity, and Elizabeth replied that she would refer the whole matter to her Council. All this scene was

[1] Yaxley was sent back from Madrid with glowing promises and encouragement from Philip to Mary and Darnley, and 20,000 crowns in money. The ship, however, in which he sailed from Flanders was wrecked, and Yaxley's lifeless body was washed up on the coast of Northumberland, with the money and despatches attached to it. The money, of course, never reached Mary, but formed the subject of a long squabble as to the respective claims for it, of the Crown and the Earl of Northumberland. (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, vol. i.).

for the purpose of putting herself right with France and Spain, and had been arranged on the previous night, when Murray was closeted with the Queen and Cecil. Cecil's own minute of the interview agrees closely with that of Guzman, just quoted. "Her Majesty asked him (Murray), in the presence of several persons, if he had ever undertaken anything against the person of his Queen. He denied it firmly and solemnly, saying, if it might be proved that he was either consenting or privy to any such intent, he besought her Majesty to cause his head to be struck off and sent to Scotland . . . he testified before God that in all his counsels he had no other meaning but principally the honour of Almighty God, by conserving the state of His religion in Scotland. . . . And, to conclude, her Majesty spoke very roundly to him . . . that she would by her actions let it appear that she would not for the price of a world maintain any subject in disobedience against his prince." [1]

Cecil's characteristic policy is plainly seen in the Queen's treatment of Murray. He invariably endeavoured to keep Elizabeth legally in the right, and usually with success. But still Murray and the Scottish Protestants were now his main instruments for preventing the danger approaching England over the Scottish Border. The old national lines of division had grown fainter with the international league of Catholics facing a league of Protestants. Mary Stuart had definitely thrown in her lot with the former, in the hope of satisfying her ambition; [2] and the Scottish spectre was perhaps more

[1] State Papers, Scotland.

[2] Randolph's letter, 6th February 1566, gives particulars of Mary's adhesion to the League of Bayonne (Harl. MSS. 4645); but she does not appear actually to have signed the "bond" sent to her, as she was urged to do by the Bishop of Dunblane and other papal emissaries. There is not the slightest doubt, however, that she looked at this time to the Catholic league alone for help in her claims, and had decided to defy England and the Protestant party.

threatening to England at this moment than ever it had been before. The obvious course was that which Cecil followed—namely, to avoid an excuse for a national war or for foreign interference, and to encourage the Scottish Protestants to stand for the liberties they had won; whilst assuming as indisputable that they were not in arms against their sovereign, but against their enemies and hers, who had interposed between the Queen and her loving subjects.

CHAPTER VIII

1566–1567

THROUGH the spring of 1566 the unfortunate Mary Stuart hurried to her destruction. Her dislike of her husband increased as Bothwell obtained more influence over her; all prudence with regard to the overt favouring of Catholicism was cast aside, Murray and the "rebels" were sternly forbidden to return to Scotland, and the breach between Mary and "her good sister" grew wider every day. Nor is this to be wondered at. Randolph was busy in supporting the Protestants, and had been warned away from Mary's court. His letters to Cecil are full of dread foreboding of disaster to come, foreboding which most historians interpret as foreknowledge. Cecil's enemies have sought industriously to connect him with the sanguinary scenes which were shortly afterwards enacted in Scotland; but they have always reasoned from the information contained in Randolph's letters to him, which in no case can be considered as evidence against him. That he was aware before Rizzio's murder that some sort of plot existed,[1] and that Murray and his friends were parties to it, is certain; but that he himself had any share in its concoction, so far as the killing of Rizzio is concerned, has never been proved, and is most improbable.[2] As has been seen, his remedy for the

[1] Randolph to Cecil, 1st March; and Randolph and Bedford to Cecil, 6th March (Scottish State Papers).

[2] Randolph wrote to Leicester on the 13th February 1566, telling him of a plot to kill Rizzio, and probably the Queen, in order that Lennox and his son Darnley might seize the crown. He says he thinks it better *not* to tell

Scottish danger was not murder; for so far-seeing a man must have known that the killing of a favourite secretary could not divert Mary from the league of Catholic sovereigns, or alter her policy towards England whilst Huntly, Bothwell, and Athol were at her side, and papal emissaries in her close confidence. The killing of Rizzio satisfied Darnley's spite, and served Murray's and Argyll's personal ends, but was more likely to injure than benefit English national objects.

What Cecil was personally doing during the first three months of 1566 was to strengthen the Protestant party in Scotland by money and promises of support,[1] whilst dividing the Catholic sovereigns upon whom Mary Stuart depended, by working desperately to bring the Archduke's match to a successful issue. With him now, in addition to the Earl of Sussex, were the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Arundel, and many others who usually leant

Cecil, but to keep the secret between the writer and Leicester. On the 1st March, Randolph sent to Cecil copies of the two "Conventions," signed by the Earls—namely, that of Darnley, Morton, and Ruthven, to kill Rizzio; and that of Murray, Argyll, Rothes, &c., to uphold Darnley in all his quarrels. Bedford, writing to Cecil on the 6th March, begged him earnestly to keep the whole matter secret, except from Leicester and the Queen. It will thus be seen that, far from being a promoter of the Darnley plot to kill Rizzio, Cecil did not know of it in time to stop its perpetration, if he had been inclined to do so, as the murder was committed on the 9th March. Against this, however, must be placed, for what it is worth, Guzman's statement that Cecil had told Lady Margaret of Rizzio's murder as having taken place the day before it really occurred.

[1] From a statement of Guzman (28th January 1566) it would appear that Cecil, probably in union with Murray, had some idea of bringing Darnley round to the English interest. The Queen (Elizabeth), he says, had refused Rambouillet's suggestion that when he arrived in Scotland he might bring about a reconciliation between the two Queens. "Afterwards, however, Cecil went to his (Rambouillet's) lodgings, and told him that when the King of Scotland, bearing in mind that he had been an English subject, should write modestly to the Queen, saying that he was sorry for her anger, and greatly wished that it should disappear, he (Cecil) believed that everything would be settled, if at the same time the Queen of Scotland would send an Ambassador hither to treat of Lady Margaret's affairs" (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, vol. i.).

to the Catholic side; for Leicester was openly under French influence, always suspicious in the eyes of old-fashioned Englishmen, and now more than ever distrusted, for Cardinal Lorraine's agents were around Mary, and the Guisan Rambouillet was carrying the Order of St. Michael to Darnley, with loving messages to the Queen of Scots.

On the last day of January 1566, Cecil and other Councillors went to Guzman's house to discuss the eternal question of the trade regulations and the suppression of piracy. When their conference was finished, Cecil took the Ambassador aside and urgently besought him to use his great influence with the Queen in favour of the Archduke's suit. The next day the request was pressed even more warmly by Sussex, who told Guzman that the majority of the Council had decided to address a joint note on the subject to the Queen. The Spaniard was not enthusiastic, for he did not wish to break entirely with Leicester in view of possibilities; but on the 2nd February he broached the subject to the Queen and discussed it at length. She was, as usual, diplomatic and shifty; but whenever she was uncomfortably pressed, began to talk of her marriage with Leicester as a possibility; and two days afterwards Guzman saw her walking in the gallery at Whitehall with Leicester, who, she said, was just persuading her to marry him, "as she would do if he were a king's son." People thought, she continued, that it was Leicester's fault she was unmarried, and it had made him so unpopular that he would have to leave court.

Almost daily Cecil or Sussex urged the Ambassador to favour the Archduke with the Queen, and were untiring in their attempts to induce the Archduke himself to come to England, in the hope of forcing the Queen's hand. As a means to the same end they continued to

sow jealousy between the Catholic sovereigns. "Cecil tells me," writes Guzman (2nd March), "that so great and constant are the attempts of the French to hinder this marriage, and to perturb the peace and friendship between your Majesty and this country, that they leave no stone unturned with that object. They are gaining over Lord Robert with gifts and favours, and are even doing the same with Throgmorton. It is true that Cecil is not friendly with them, but I think he tells me the truth with regard to it."[1] Again, when Sir Robert Melvil, who had come from Mary to pray Elizabeth to release Lady Margaret, was leaving London on his return, Cecil begged him to see Guzman before his departure, "as no person had done so much as he had to bring about concord between the two Queens, and he (Cecil) thought that if the differences could be referred to him (Guzman) for arbitration, they might easily be settled." Guzman thought so too, and wrote by Melvil to Mary to that effect, advising her to abandon arrogant pretensions, and accept such honourable terms as should satisfy Elizabeth;[2] and, as a preliminary, he exhorted her to live on good terms with her husband. Before Melvil left Cecil, the latter told him that they had news of Rizzio's murder (this was written on the 18th March), and at the same time there came a messenger from Murray, saying that he had returned into Scotland (from Newcastle) on a letter of assurance from Darnley. The Earl of Murray had entered Edinburgh in triumph the day after the murder, and the Queen and Darnley had together started for Dunbar.

Another opportunity for Cecil to breed dissensions between Spain and France came when the news arrived

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, vol. i.

[2] Only two days before this Guzman gave the same advice to Elizabeth. Both she and Cecil then assured him of their desire for such a settlement, which would have checked French designs in Scotland, and disarmed Spain.

of Pero Melendez's massacre of the French settlement in Florida, on the ground that the territory belonged to the King of Spain. The Queen professed herself to Guzman delighted at such good news; but was surprised that Florida was claimed by Spain, as she always thought that the Frenchman Ribault had discovered it; indeed she had seriously thought of conquering it herself. Guzman saw Cecil when he left the Queen (30th March), and the Secretary had nothing but reprobation for Coligny, who had sent out the French Florida expedition. "He said your Majesty should proclaim your rights with regard to Florida, that they might be known everywhere." Cecil, shortly before this, whilst discussing the question of Hawkins' voyages to Guinea and South America, said that he himself had been offered a share in the enterprise, but that he did not care to have anything to do with such adventures. By all this it will be seen that Cecil's strenuous efforts to combat the Catholic league, which might lend to Mary Stuart a united support against England, took the traditional form of drawing the House of Austria to the side of England, and causing jealousy between France and Spain. He knew that in the long-run national antipathies were stronger than religious affinities, and that the Catholic league, which had been ineffectual after the peace of Cateau Cambresis (1559), could with time and industry be broken again.[1]

[1] We do not often hear of Lady Cecil's action in politics, but on this occasion she seems to have seconded her husband. Guzman writes (22nd April 1566): "Cecil's wife tells me that the French Ambassador says that if the Archduke comes hither, he will cause discord in the country, as he will endeavour to uphold his religion, and will have many to follow him. She thinks the Queen will never marry Lord Robert, or, indeed, any one else, unless it be the Archduke, which is the match Cecil desires. Certainly, if any one has information on the matter, it is Cecil's wife, as she is clever and greatly influences him."

A few days after the above was written, Guzman visited Cecil, who was ill, and mentioned how annoyed the French were when they saw the Archduke's suit prospering. "They then at once bring forward their own King to

But while Cecil approached Spain in order to divide her from France, he never forgot that Philip was the champion of the Catholics throughout the world, and kept his eyes on every movement which might forebode ill to England. His spies in Flanders were daily sending reports of the rumours there of King Philip's attitude towards the resistance of the Flemish nobles to the Inquisition; indeed, as Guzman writes to his master (29th April): "These people have intelligence from everywhere, and are watching religious affairs closely; but it is difficult to understand what they are about, and with whom they correspond, as Cecil does it all himself, and does not trust even his own secretary."[1]

Cecil might well be vigilant, for Mary Stuart's plots went on unceasingly.[2] Sir Robert Melvil arrived in

embarrass the Queen. When this trick has hindered the negotiations, they take up with Leicester again, and think we do not see through them." "Yes," replied Cecil, "they are very full of fine words and promises, as usual, and they think when they have Lord Robert on their side their business is as good as done, but their great object is to embroil the Emperor with the King of Spain." (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, vol. i.)

[1] When news came of Brederode's "protest" in the Netherlands and the rising of the "beggars," Guzman tried hard to discover from Cecil whether any connection existed between the rebels and the English. He concluded that there was none, although the eastern counties' ports were full already of Flemish Protestant fugitives. The Queen was very emphatic in her condemnation of the "beggars" at first. "Fine Christianity, she said, was this, which led subjects to defy their sovereign. It had begun in Germany and in France, and then extended to Scotland, and now to Flanders, and perhaps some day will happen here, as things are going now. Some rogues, she said, even wanted to make out that *she* knew something about the affairs in Flanders. Only let me get them into my hands, she exclaimed, and I will soon make them understand the interest I feel in all that concerns my brother, the King" (*i.e.* Philip). (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.)

[2] See the letters of Cecil's spy, Ruxby (or Rooksby), *in extenso* in Haynes. This man had fled from England to Scotland for debt. He was known to Cecil, who, when he heard that he was dealing with Mary Stuart in Edinburgh, warned him. Ruxby then offered his services as a spy, and sent Cecil very compromising information about Mary's plans. Melvil discovered this, and Ruxby was seized by the Scots and put in prison, Killigrew's attempts, at the instance of Cecil, to convey him to England as an escaped recusant, being thus frustrated. (Hatfield Papers.)

London in May, again to discuss the question of the succession, and to ask Elizabeth to stand sponsor for Mary's expected child; but, greatly to Elizabeth's indignation, he brought amiable letters from the Scottish Queen to the Earl of Northumberland and other English Catholic nobles; and whilst he was in London, an emissary from Mary Stuart to the Pope passed through on his return to Scotland with 20,000 crowns from the Pontiff, and a promise of 4000 crowns a month to pay a thousand soldiers for her (Mary's) defence. An envoy, too, of the rebel Shan O'Neil was at the same time lurking in Edinburgh, conferring with the Queen.

All this was known to Cecil and Elizabeth, and drove them ever nearer to Spain and to the Archduke's match, Leicester himself, probably out of jealousy of Ormonde, who was vigorously flirting with the Queen, now openly siding with the Austrian. Even Throgmorton was reconciled with Cecil by the Earls of Pembroke and Leicester, who promised the Secretary that Throgmorton should no longer thwart his policy.

On the 23rd June, Sir James Melvil arrived with breakneck speed in London from Edinburgh, with news of the birth of Mary Stuart's heir.[1] It was late, but Sir Robert Melvil, the Ambassador, lost no time in conveying the tidings to Cecil, whose own entry of the event in the Perpetual Calendar at Hatfield runs thus: "1566, 19 June, was borne James at Edinburgh inter horæ 10 et 11 matutino." Cecil promised to keep the news secret from the court until Mary's own messenger could convey it officially to the Queen. Elizabeth was at Greenwich at the time, and when Cecil arrived she was "in great mirth dancing after supper." Cecil approached the Queen and whispered in her ear, and in a moment the

[1] He started from Edinburgh a few hours after James's birth, and reached London in four days (Melvil Memoirs).

secret was out and all joy vanished. With a burst of envy, Elizabeth, almost in tears, told her ladies that the Queen of Scots was mother of a fair boy, whilst she, Elizabeth, was but a "barren stock."[1] When the Melvils saw her the next day she had recovered her composure, and promised to send Cecil to Scotland to be present at the christening, which embassy the Secretary with some difficulty evaded, "as there were so many suspicions on both sides."[2]

The Queen had suffered a serious illness early in the summer, which, with the anxiety of her position, had reduced her to a very low condition. It was decided that a progress should be undertaken for her health, in which the University of Oxford could be visited, and Cecil be specially honoured by a stay of the Queen at his house of Burghley. She left London in July, and underwent an ordeal at Oxford similar to that which she had experienced two years before at Cambridge. The vestments controversy was raging with great bitterness, clergymen were deprived and punished for contumacy, pulpit and press were silenced, and the Protestants resentful. Cecil was firm, but diplomatic, and the Queen indignant that her laws should be called into question. Under the circumstances it required great tact on both sides to avoid any untoward event during the Queen's visit to Oxford, where the Puritan party was very strong. Leicester and Cecil were both with the Queen, the former strongly favouring the Puritans, the latter taking his stand on the Queen's order for the discipline of the Church. On the Queen's reception, the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Humphreys, one of the leaders of the anti-vestment party, approached to kiss the Queen's

[1] Melvil Memoirs.

[2] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, vol. i. On the 20th July, Cecil writes to Lord Cobham, "I trust I shall not be troubled with the Scottish journey" (Hatfield Papers).

hand. "Mr. Doctor," said the Queen, smiling, "that loose gown becomes you mighty well; I wonder your notions should be so narrow." Once, during the speech of the public orator, tender ground was touched, but the visit passed over without further embittering an already bitter controversy, and Leicester and Cecil, Puritan Knollys, Catholic Howard of Effingham, and many others received the honorary degree of Master of Arts.[1]

Cecil's own entries in his journal of the period are meagre enough :—

"1566. June. Fulsharst, a foole, was suborned to speak slanderously of me at Greenwich to the Queen's Majesty; for which he was committed to Bridewell.

"June 16. A discord inter Com. Sussex et Leicester at Greenwych, ther appeased by Her Majesty.

"August 3. The Queen's Majesty was at Colly Weston, in Northamptonshire.

"August 5. The Queen's Majesty at my house in Stamford.

"August 31. The Queen in progress went from Woodstock to Oxford."

During the progress a disagreement between Cecil and Leicester took place, as well as that mentioned between the latter and Sussex. The communications between the Earl and the French were constant, and had caused much heart-burning. The existence of a strong and active party in the English court ostentatiously leaning to the French side, at a time when Cecil's whole policy depended upon keeping the goodwill of Spain, hampered him at every turn, and he wrote a letter to Sir Thomas Hoby, privately instructing him to give out in France that Leicester's influence over the Queen had decreased, and that the French need not

[1] Nichol's "Progresses of Queen Elizabeth."

court him so much as they did. When the letter arrived, Hoby, the Ambassador, was dead, and it fell into other hands. Leicester heard of it, and taxed Cecil, who retorted angrily.

Even in Cecil's own house the intrigues against his policy continued. He had sent Danett to the Emperor with the draft clauses of the proposed marriage treaty with the Archduke, and the news from Vienna seemed to confirm the best hopes of those who favoured the Austrian match. This, of course, did not suit Leicester. Vulcob, the nephew of the new French Ambassador, Bôchetel de la Forest, went to Stamford to carry his uncle's excuses for not coming earlier to see the Queen. As he was entering the presence-chamber at Burghley, Leicester stopped him, and began talking about the marriage. He hardly knew what to think, he said, but he was sure that if the Queen ever did marry, she would choose no one but himself for a husband. The Frenchman, no doubt, understood him. The Archduke's match was getting too promising, and must be checked by the usual French move. So Vulcob took care when he saw the Queen to dwell mainly upon the attractive physical qualities of the young King Charles IX. Elizabeth was never tired of such a subject, and very soon the French Ambassador was warmly intriguing to bring forward his master's suit again, as a counterpoise to the Austrian hopes, but really in Leicester's interests, whilst presents and loving messages came thick and fast from France to Leicester and Throgmorton. The Emperor's reply by Danett was, after all, not so encouraging as Cecil and Sussex had been led to expect, and Leicester's hopes rose higher than ever. During the Queen's progress he arranged with his friends a scheme which seemed as if it would stop the Archduke's chances for ever. Parliament was to meet in October, and the plan was to influence both Houses to

press the Queen on the questions of the succession and her marriage, "so that by this means the Archduke's business may be upset . . . and then he (Leicester) may treat of his own affair at his leisure." It was clear that any attempt on the part of the Puritans and Leicester to force the Queen's hands with regard to the marriage whilst the delicate religious question was under discussion with the Emperor, would put an end to the negotiations, and Cecil and his friends strove their utmost to avoid such a result. They urged Guzman again to persuade the Queen to the match; the Duke of Norfolk came purposely to court with the same object, and for once Cecil himself was willing, in appearance, to place the religious question in the background. "Cecil," writes Guzman, "desires this business so greatly, that he does not speak about the religious point; but this may be deceit, as his wife is of a contrary opinion, and thinks that great trouble may be caused to the peace of the country through it. She has great influence with her husband, and no doubt discusses the matter with him; but she appears a much more furious heretic than he is." Well might the Queen and Cecil be apparently more anxious to sink religious differences than Lady Cecil, for they probably knew how imminent the danger was better than she.

The Protestants in Flanders and Holland were in open revolt; and slow Philip was collecting in Spain and Italy an overwhelming force by land and sea, with which he himself was to come as the avenger of his injured kingship, and crush the rising spirit of religious reform. If such an army as his swept over and desolated his Netherlands, whither next might it turn? For six years Elizabeth had kept Spain from harming her, out of jealousy of France; but France was now more than half Guisan, and in favour of Mary Stuart, and the Huguenots themselves had deserted England when she

was fighting their battle at Havre. No help, then, could be expected from France if Spain attacked Elizabeth for her "heresy"; and the Queen and her wise minister were fain to conciliate a foe they were not powerful enough to face in the open. Elizabeth went beyond the Spaniard himself in her violent denunciation of the insurgents in the Netherlands. Their only aim, she said, was liberty against God and princes. They had neither reason, virtue, nor religion. She excused herself for having helped the French Huguenots, which she only did, she said, to recover Calais. If the Netherlands rebels came to her for help, she would show them how dearly she held the interests of her good brother King Philip; "and she cursed subjects who did not recognise the mercy that God had shown them in sending them a prince so clement and humane as your Majesty."[1] Cecil was not quite so extravagant as this, but he missed no opportunity at so critical a juncture of drawing nearer to Spain, and was even more compliant than ever before on the vexed subject of the English right to trade in the Spanish Indies. "Cecil is well disposed in this matter," writes Guzman, "and I am not surprised that the others are not, as they are interested. Cecil assures me that he has always stood aloof from similar enterprises."

In the meanwhile Leicester's persistent efforts to hamper Cecil's policy were bearing fruit. With great difficulty Cecil persuaded the House of Commons to vote the supplies before the question of the succession was dealt with, but a free fight on the floor of the House preceded the vote. The Queen was irritated beyond measure at the inopportune activity of the extreme party about the succession. Sussex, the Spanish Ambassador, and others of Catholic leanings, pointed out to her that if she married the Archduke there would be an end of

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, vol. i.

the trouble, and she need not then think of any successor other than her own children. At length a joint meeting of the two Houses adopted an address to the Queen, urging her to appoint a successor if she did not intend to marry. When the address was presented, her rage passed all decency.[1] The Duke of Norfolk, her own kinsman, and the first subject of the realm, was insulted with vulgar abuse, which well-nigh reduced him to tears. Leicester, Pembroke, Northampton, and Howard were railed at and scolded in turn; only once did she soften somewhat towards Leicester. She had thought, she said, that if all the world had abandoned her, he would never do so. What do the devils want? she asked Guzman. Oh! your Majesty, replied the Ambassador, what they want is liberty, and if monarchs do not combine against it, it is easy to see how it will all end. She would send the ungrateful fellow Leicester away, she said, and the Archduke might now be without suspicion. Gradually, as she calmed, her diplomacy asserted itself, and cleverly, by alternations of threats and cajolery, she reduced Parliament to the required condition of invertebrate dependence upon her will.[2]

[1] Although Cecil was a member of the Commons deputation, he was, of course, known to be against the measure, and escaped the Queen's vituperation. Cecil himself in his notes thus refers to the matter: "1566. October 17. Certen Lords, viz., Erle of Pembroke and Lecester, wer excluded the presence-chamber, for furdering the proposition of the succession to be declared in Parliament without the Queen's allowance."

[2] The Parliament was dissolved on 2nd January 1567. The principal measure adopted in it was that which gave Parliamentary confirmation to the consecration of the bishops and archbishops, in order to counteract the attacks promoted by Bonner against the Protestant consecration. The measure was principally urged by the bishops themselves, and in the Lords was carried to a great extent by their votes, there being twenty-eight bishops present, and thirty-two lay peers. The House of Commons was strongly Protestant, and was dissolved instead of being prorogued, as was expected. Although the measure referred to was passed, the Government refrained from proceeding further against the Catholic bishops who had refused the oath of supremacy. (See Strype's "Annals," &c.)

All this, we may be sure, did not decrease the ill-feeling in the court, which for the next six months became a hotbed of intrigue. On the one side were Norfolk, Sussex, the Conservatives, and the Catholics, aided by Guzman, and cautiously supported by Cecil and Bacon; whilst on the other, Leicester, Throgmorton, Pembroke, Knollys, and the Puritans, backed by the French Ambassador, ceaselessly endeavoured to check the Austrian-Spanish friendship, and if possible, above all, to ruin Sussex and prevent his embassy to the Emperor. That Leicester would stick at no inconsistency is seen by the curious fact that, whilst he was nominally heading the Puritan party, he, according to Melvil, was strenuously favouring the claims of the Queen of Scots to the succession. He assured Elizabeth that this would be her best safeguard, or "Cecil would undo all," the reason for this being that Cecil was known to be in favour of Catharine Grey.

On the 14th February 1567, Cecil sent word to his friend Guzman that he had just received secret advice of the murder of Darnley, of which he gave some hasty particulars. The intelligence could hardly have come as a surprise to the Spaniard, for a month previously he had informed Philip that some such act was contemplated. Within a few hours of the reception of the news in London, Leicester sent his brother, the Earl of Warwick, to Catharine Grey's husband, to offer him his services in the matter of the succession. Five days afterwards Sir James Melvil came with full particulars of the foul deed at Kirk o' Field, and at once rumour was busy with the name of Mary Stuart as an accomplice in her husband's death. Elizabeth expressed sorrow and compassion on the day she heard the news, but rather doubtfully told Guzman "that she could not believe that the Queen of Scots could be to blame for

so dreadful a thing, notwithstanding the murmurs of the people." When Guzman, however, pointed out to her how dangerous it would be for the opposite party (Catharine Grey's friends) to make capital out of the accusation, the Queen agreed that it would be wise to discountenance it, and to keep friendly with Mary Stuart, in order to prevent her from falling under French influence again.

In a letter from Cecil to Norris (20th February) he says: "The Queen sent yesterday my Lady Howard and my wife to Lady Lennox, in the Tower, to open this matter to her, who could not by any means be kept from such passions of mind as the horribleness of the fact did require. . . . I hope her Majesty will show some favourable compassion of the said lady, whom any humane nature must needs pity. . . . The most suspicion that I can hear is of Earl Bothwell, yet I would not be thought the author of any such report."[1] Lady Margaret, in her agony of grief, made no scruple at first in accusing her daughter-in-law of complicity in the murder; but the bereaved mother left the Tower on the following day, doubtless warned of the unwisdom of saying what she thought. At least, when she saw Sir James Melvil she told him, "She did not believe that Mary had been a party to the death of her son, but she could not help complaining of her bad treatment of him." But whatever she might say, the spirits of the Catholic party in England sank to zero at the black cloud which hovered over their candidate. "Every day it becomes clearer that the Queen of Scotland must take some step to prove that she had no hand in the death of her husband if she is to prosper in her claims to the succession here,"[2] wrote Guzman. Fortunately this book

[1] *Scrinia Ceciliana.*

[2] Spanish State Papers: Guzman to Philip, 1st March.

is not the place in which to discuss the vexed question of Mary's complicity in Darnley's death, but her contemporaries both in England and Scotland, as well as abroad, certainly thought her guilty. Cecil, writing to Sir Henry Norris in March, mentions the suspicions against Bothwell, Balfour, &c., and says, "There are words added, which I am loth to report, that touch the Queen of Scots, which I hold best to be suppressed. Further, such persons anointed are not to be thought ill of without manifest proof."[1] And again, a few days afterwards, he says, "The Queen of Scots is not well spoken of." The entry of the event in Cecil's journal makes no mention of Mary. It runs thus: "Feb. 9. The L. Darnley, K. of Scots, was killed and murdered near Edenburgh;" and on the following day the news is amplified thus: "Feb. 10. *Hora secunda post mediam noctem Hen. Rex Scotiæ interfectus fuit, per Jac Co. Bothwell, Jac Ormeston de Ormeston, Hob Ormeston patrem dicti Jac Ormeston, Tho Hepbourn.*"

Morette, the Duke of Savoy's special envoy to Scotland, had left Edinburgh the day after the murder, and on his way through London saw Guzman. The Queen of Scots had assured Morette that she would avenge her husband's death, and punish the murderers, but he made no secret of his belief that she had prior knowledge of the plan. Whilst Morette was dining with Guzman and the French Ambassador, a French messenger named Clerivault arrived at the house, bringing a letter from Mary to the Queen of England, claiming her pity, and similar letters for Catharine de Medici, the Archbishop of Glasgow, and others,[2] denouncing the crime.[3] Mary,

[1] *Scrinia Ceciliana.*

[2] These letters will be found in Labanoff, vol. ii.

[3] Catharine de Medici's attitude when she heard the news was characteristic. She thus wrote to Montmorenci: "Gossip: my son the King is sending you this courier to give you the news he has received from Scotland.

indeed, lost no time in endeavouring to put herself right before the world. She offered rewards for the discovery of the murderers; but when all fingers are pointed at Bothwell and his creatures, when public placards were posted in the capital accusing them and hinting at the Queen's complicity, Mary still kept the principals at her side, and made no move against their subaltern instruments. In vain, for a time, the bereaved father Lennox demanded vengeance; in vain Elizabeth, by Killigrew, sent indignant letters to Mary; in vain the Catholic Archbishop of Glasgow exhorted her to prove her own innocence by pursuing the offenders without mercy. Bothwell stood ever by her side, and his clansmen cowed the murmuring citizens who looked with aversion now upon their beautiful young Queen. At length, goaded to take some action by the danger of losing the Catholic support, upon which alone she had depended, she held the sham trial in the Edinburgh Tolbooth two months after the crime. Lennox refused to attend the travesty of justice, and Bothwell was unanimously acquitted. Murray had left the court before the murder, and fled to France when the result of the trial was known. Bothwell, loaded with favours, insolent with success, seemed to hold Scotland and the Queen in the hollow of his hand. The nobles were mostly bought or threatened into shameful compliance, and only the "preachers" and the townsfolk kept alive the growing horror of the Queen. No longer, even, did the humble peasant women hesitate, before Mary's face, to make their loyal blessing conditional upon her innocence.[1]

You see that the young fool (Darnley) has not been King very long. If he had been wiser he would have been alive still. It is a great piece of luck for the Queen, my daughter, to be rid of him." (MSS. Bibliothèque Nationale, Bethune.)

[1] Drury to Cecil, April 1567 (State Papers, Scotland).

What was horrified doubt before became indignant reprobation when, only three months after Darnley's death, Mary married the hastily divorced Bothwell. Then came the hurried flight in disguise towards Dunbar, the gathering of the nobles, the flight of Bothwell at Carbery Hill, and the conveyance of the disgraced Queen to Edinburgh. When nothing but vows of defiance and vengeance against Bothwell's enemies could be obtained from her, and it was clear that the unfortunate woman was deaf to reason and decency, came the crowning degradation of Lochleven, and Mary Stuart's sun set to rise no more.

To a short life of turbulent pleasure succeeded twenty years of plotting against the peace and independence of England and the cause of religious liberty. During that twenty years Cecil and his mistress were pitted against one of the cleverest women in Europe, supported by all that was discontented in England and Scotland, and all that was distinctively Catholic abroad. In the critical position caused by the rising of the Protestant Lords against Bothwell and the Queen, Cecil's view diverged somewhat from that of Elizabeth. The latter was naturally first concerned at the want of respect shown on all sides to an anointed sovereign, which subject was always a tender one with her; whereas the Secretary was still anxious, before all else, to exclude French influence from Scotland. Writing to Norris in France (26th June), he conveys the news of Mary's restraint, and at the same time encloses letters from Scotland recalling Murray (then at Lyons), "the sending of which letters requireth great haste, whereof you must not make the Scottish Ambassador privy.[1] . . . The best part of the (Scots) nobility hath confederated themselves to follow, by way of justice, the condemnation of Bothwell and his com-

[1] *Scrinia Ceciliana.*

plices in the murder of the King. Bothwell defends himself by the Queen's maintenance and the Hamiltons, so he hath some party, though it be not great. The 15th of this month he brought the Queen into the field with her power, which was so small, as he escaped himself without fighting and left the Queen in the field; and she yielded herself to the Lords, flatly denying to grant justice against Bothwell, so as they have restrained her in Loch-leven until they come unto the end of their pursuit against Bothwell. . . . Murray's return into Scotland is much desired by them, and for the weal both of England and Scotland I wish he were here. For his manner of returning and safety, I pray require Mr. Stewart to have good care. . . . The French Ambassador, and Villeroy, who is there (in Scotland), pretend favour to the Lords, with great offers; and it may be that they may do as much on the other side" (*i.e.* in France).[1] It was this last possibility which so much disturbed Cecil, and it was to avert it that Murray's return was so ardently desired, for he was known always to be opposed to the French influence in his country. In August, after Murray had returned to Scotland (visiting Elizabeth at Windsor on his way home at the end of July), Cecil wrote again to Norris: "You shall perceive by the Queen's letter to you herewith how earnestly she is bent in the favour of the Queen of Scots; and truly since the beginning she hath been greatly offended with the Lords in this action;[2] yet

[1] *Scrinia Ceciliana.*

[2] Again, on the 3rd September, Cecil writes to Norris: "The Queen's Majesty, our sovereign, remaineth still offended with the Lords (of Scotland) for the Queen: the example moveth her." Later in the month (27th September) a French envoy came through England on a mission to Scotland, and proposed to Elizabeth that joint action should be taken to secure Mary's liberation. The envoy was persuaded in London to refrain from continuing his journey, and we see that Cecil's feeling in favour of the Protestant party was gradually gaining ground in Elizabeth's counsels. He writes: "Surely

no counsel can stay her Majesty from manifesting of her misliking of them; *so as, indeed, I think thereby the French may, and will, easily catch them*, and make their present profit of them, to the damage of England. In this behalf her Majesty had no small misliking of that book which you sent me written in French, whose (author's) name yet I know not; but, howsoever, I think him of great wit and acquaintance in the affairs of the world. It is not in my power to procure any reward, and therefore you must so use the matter as he neither be discouraged nor think unkindness in me."[1]

How much Cecil dreaded renewed French interference in Scotland is seen at this time by his ever-growing cordiality towards Spain. An acrimonious discussion was going on, both in London and in Paris, with regard to the restoration of Calais to England, which was now due by the treaty of Cateau-Cambresis. Cecil and the Queen were both emphatic in their condemnation of the Protestant risings in the Spanish Netherlands, though French agents kept whispering to Guzman that help was being sent thither by England. The union between Cecil and the Spaniard was nevertheless closer than ever. The latter, in March, secretly told Cecil that the King of France was sending De Croc to Scotland,[2] and that there seemed to be some mystery brewing in that quarter. The Secretary

if either the French King or the (English) Queen should appear to make any force against them of Scotland for the Queen (of Scots') cause, we find it credible that it were the next way to make an end of her; and for that cause her Majesty is loth to take that way." As an instance of the divergence of the Queen and Cecil during the summer, Guzman, detailing a private conversation he had with the Queen in July, during which he warned her again against French interference in Scotland, writes: "Certain things passed in the conversation which she begged me not to communicate *even to Cecil*."

[1] *Scrinia Ceciliana.*

[2] The object of the French was to retain their alliance with Scotland in any case, which, indeed, was their great safeguard against England and Spain.

replied that he knew it; they had a plot to steal the Prince of Scotland and take him to France, but that steps had been taken to prevent such a thing. Guzman thereupon urged the Queen of England to have the infant Prince brought to England, Mary having told Killigrew that she was willing that this should be done.[1] Indeed, at this time Cecil's perseverance had quite won Spanish sympathy, and had widened the rift in the Catholic league, as was necessary for England's safety, Guzman being if anything more eager than Cecil to checkmate the intrigues of the French in Scotland.

The efforts on the other side were just as incessant to divide Spain from England, and more than once at this period caused temporary estrangement between them. In June a somewhat unexpected embassy came from the Emperor, with the object of asking Elizabeth for monetary aid against the Turk. The principal Ambassador, Stolberg, was a Protestant, and the Queen immediately jumped at the incorrect conclusion that he had come to arrange for the wedding of the Archduke. Before even he arrived in London, Stolberg had been persuaded that a great Catholic league had been formed, including his own sovereign the Emperor, with the object of crushing Elizabeth and rooting out Protestantism from Europe; and when, at his formal reception at Richmond,[2] the

De Croc was sent as Ambassador in 1566 for this especial purpose. Villeroy and Lignerolles were subsequently despatched respectively to conciliate Murray and Bothwell. When Murray assumed the Regency, the French were just as anxious to recognise him as they had been to welcome other régimes, and Charles IX. himself assured Murray of his continued friendship. (See letters and instructions in Chéruel.)

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, vol. i.

[2] Cecil writes to Lord Cobham (27th May): "Lady Clinton hath procured my wife to make a supper to-morrow, where a greater person will covertly be, as she is wont. The Queen hath made asseverations to persuade the Duke (of Norfolk) of her effectual dealing to marry, and to deal plainly in this embassy"

Queen gave Stolberg an unfavourable reply to his request for aid against the Turk, Cecil took Guzman, who accompanied him, aside and told him that the Queen and Council had learned the particulars of a league of the Catholic powers against Elizabeth and the Protestants,[1] in favour of the Queen of Scots. The better to effect the object, he said, the Emperor had made a disadvantageous truce with the Turk, whereat the English Council was much scandalised, and was determined to make all necessary preparations, this being the reason why the Queen had answered the Ambassador so unfavourably.[2] Guzman was shocked that so sensible a person as Cecil should believe such nonsense. Probably Cecil knew as well as Guzman that the league was dead, so far as united action against England was concerned; but such attempts as this, to serve French ends by arousing jealousy between Spain and England, were constant, and occasionally, as in this instance, aroused some distrust on one side or the other.[3]

As soon as the detention of Mary Stuart was known

(Hatfield Papers). The object of the supper was to enable the Queen privately to meet the Emperor's Ambassadors before their public reception. She seems to have been much disappointed that they had nothing to say about the marriage, and as a result decided at last to send the Earl of Sussex to the Emperor.

[1] Guzman expressed his disbelief in any such intelligence having been received, whereupon Cecil showed him the paper. The document had reached Cecil in German from one of his agents, and is still in the Burghley Papers. Guzman pointed out to Cecil the undiplomatic form in which the articles of the alleged treaty were drawn up and their inherent improbability, which Cecil admitted. The particulars are now known to have been a fabrication, although the main object of the league was unquestionably to suppress Protestantism by extermination.

[2] The answer, which Guzman calls a very impertinent one, will be found in State Papers, Foreign, June 1567, and the original draft, in Cecil's hand, at Hatfield.

[3] Guzman writes (5th July): "Everything that can be done to arouse the suspicion of the Queen against your Majesty is being done by certain people, and I am trying all I can to banish such feeling and keep her in a good

by the French Government an attempt was made to gain Murray to the side of France, in order to obtain possession of the infant Prince. Murray delayed pledging himself until he received the letters from the Lords and from Cecil, already referred to. He then started with all haste for Scotland, taking London on the way. Whilst in London at the end of July he saw Guzman, and told him as a secret that he had not even communicated to Elizabeth, that a letter existed which proved conclusively the guilt of his sister in the murder of her husband.[1] It was evident thus early that Murray, whilst expressing sympathy for his sister, and deprecating generally any derogation of the dignity of a sovereign, was determined that Mary Stuart should do no more harm to Protestantism or the relationship between Scotland and England, if he could help it. "He said he would do his best to find some means by which she should remain Queen, but without sufficient liberty to do them any harm, or marry against the will of her Council and Parliament."[2] It is evident, from a letter from

humour, without saying anything offensive of the King of France . . . I think I have satisfied and tranquillised her; although when they see your Majesty so strongly armed, suspicion is aroused, and not here alone." On the 21st July, he says, "With all the demonstrations of friendship and the friendly offers I make to the Queen from your Majesty, I find her rather anxious about the coming of the Duke of Alba to Flanders."

[1] Murray very closely describes the contents of the "first" casket letter, of which so much has been written. The arguments of Mary's defenders, founded on the long delay in the production of the letters, therefore fall to the ground, as Murray had evidently seen a copy, or the originals, before the end of July. To those who accuse Murray himself of having caused the letters to be forged, it may be replied that, on the 12th July, De Croc, on his way from Scotland to France, mentioned to Guzman in London the existence of the letters. As Dalgleish, with the letters, was captured in Edinburgh on the 20th June, there was no time in the interval for Morton in Scotland and Murray in Lyons to have concocted an elaborate forgery such as this. Murray, at all events, must be acquitted, as De Croc, leaving Scotland at the end of June, had copies of the letters in his possession.

[2] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

Cecil to Norris, that Murray arranged with the former when in England to assume the Regency of Scotland on his arrival, although not without misgiving on the part of Elizabeth, even if she personally was a consenting party to the arrangement. Murray, writing a friendly letter to Cecil early in 1568 (Hatfield Papers), mentions that a report had reached him that Cecil had been told that he (Murray) was offended because Sir William in his first letter had not addressed him as Regent. Murray assures him that this was not the case, and begs him not to allow any such thought to disturb their friendship, "the amity of the two countries being the great object of both . . . although the Queen, your mistress, outwardly seems not altogether to allow the present state here, yet I doubt not but her Highness in heart liketh it well enough." Elizabeth was at the time divided between two feelings: that of indignation at any restraint being placed upon a sovereign by subjects, and the knowledge that the imprisonment of Mary meant the disablement of the only individual whom England had to fear. Cecil was fully alive to the latter fact, whilst the former was to him of quite secondary importance when compared with the national issues involved.

When the news came of Mary's renunciation and the crowning of the infant James, the Lords wrote to Elizabeth, saying that either she must protect them, or they must accept a French alliance; and she was then obliged to prefer the interests of England to her reverence for the sacredness of a sovereign. Guzman thus tells the story: "The Queen told me she did not know what was best to be done, and asked my opinion, pointing out to me the inexpediency of showing favour to so bad an example, and, on the other hand, the danger to her of a new alliance of these people with the French . . . I think I see more inclination on her part to aid them (the

Scots) than the case at present demands, as I gave her many reasons for delay, whilst she still insisted that it was necessary to act at once." The next day (August 9) the tone of the Queen had somewhat changed. She would, she said, recall Throgmorton from Scotland, as it was beneath her dignity to have an Ambassador accredited to a sovereign in duress,[1] and she would refuse her protection and aid to the Lords. The reason for this perhaps was that "the letter she writes to Throgmorton is very short. I have seen it, though I could not read it. It was in the hands of Lord Robert (*i.e.* Leicester), who dictated it, and he carried it to the Queen for signature in my presence, *Cecil not being present.*"[2] Cecil, indeed, at this juncture had to proceed with great caution, and, as usual, by indirect and devious ways. Leicester, Pembroke, and their friends had now (August), as Guzman says, "no rivals, as Secretary Cecil proceeds respectfully, and the rest who might support him are absent. He knows well, however, that he is more diligent than they, and so keeps his footing."

[1] How wavering Elizabeth's policy was at the time, according as Leicester or Cecil was near her, may clearly be seen. By Throgmorton's instructions of 30th June (State Papers, Scotland; *in extenso* in Keith), it is evident that his mission was to blame both Mary and the Lords, making Elizabeth the arbiter between them, and to negotiate the restoration of Mary to liberty, but without political power. The Lords would not allow this, and Throgmorton failed. On the other hand, Melvil was sent back to Scotland shortly before Throgmorton, taking a message from Elizabeth to the Lords, in reply to their secret intimation that they intended to depose Mary, and a promise to the effect that she would aid them "in their honourable enterprise" (Melvil to Cecil, 1st July—State Papers, Scotland; *in extenso* in Tytler).

[2] Guzman to Philip, August 9, 1567, Spanish State Papers. Guzman at this time had a conversation with a French envoy, Lignerolles, who was returning from Scotland. He told him that Leicester's henchman Throgmorton, on his embassy to Scotland, had acted earnestly and vigorously in favour of Mary. "Which," writes Guzman, "I quite believe, as he has always been attached to her. He is also a great friend of Lord Robert's, and an enemy of Cecil, whom the Queen does not consider to be in favour of the Queen of Scots, but a partisan of Catharine" (Grey).

In the meanwhile the Catholics in England were allowed almost perfect immunity, whilst, on the other hand, strong land and sea forces were mustered, as a counterbalance to the great army to be led into Flanders by Alba. The closest friendship existed between the Spaniards and Cecil, who was never tired of assuring Guzman that Hawkins' great expedition, then on the coast bound for Guinea, should under no circumstances do anything prejudicial in any of the territories of the King of Spain; notwithstanding which, and the fact that Philip's Flemish fleet had just been effusively welcomed at Dover, John Hawkins himself, when the same fleet put into Plymouth, fired a few cannon shots at the flagship, and banged away until the Spanish flag was hauled down, to the unspeakable indignation of the Flemish admiral.

Things were in this condition in the autumn of 1567, all Europe being on the alert watching the gathering of the storm over the Netherlands. So long as there was any danger of French interference in Scotland, or of the Catholic powers taking up the cause of Mary Stuart, Elizabeth, and more especially Cecil, drew closer to Spain and the Catholic party in England. But events moved quickly, and the whole aspect changed within a few weeks. Almost simultaneously, in September 1567, came from different quarters two preliminary thunderclaps that announced the tempest. The advent of Alba in the Netherlands on his mission of vengeance had sent affrighted fugitives flying in swarms across the narrow seas to England; but when, on the 9th September, after the treacherous dinner-party in Brussels, the two highest heads in Flanders, Egmont and Horn, were struck at, and the bearers lodged in jail, all the world knew that the great struggle had begun between liberty and Protestantism on the one side, and tyranny

and Catholicism on the other. Thanks mainly to Elizabeth and Cecil, it was not to be fought out on British soil. Only a few weeks afterwards came the news of Condé's attempt to seize the young King of France and his mother, and to rescue them from the influence of Cardinal Lorraine. The attempt failed, but soon all France was ablaze with civil war, for the Protestant worm at last had turned. Betrayed, as they had been before, and face to face now with foreign mercenaries hurried into France to suppress them, the convinced Huguenots decided to stand by their faith, and fight to the death for liberty to exercise it, let the "politicians" do what they might. The two events happening almost together, whilst Mary Stuart was in prison under a cloud, and the rebel Shan O'Neil in Ireland had finally fallen, at once relieved England of all danger from without, unless the Catholic party was irresistibly triumphant both in France and Flanders. The best way to prevent that was to support those who were in arms against it, and the policy of Elizabeth and Cecil was again cautiously changed accordingly.

As soon as the Queen received from Norris news of Condé's rising, she sent for Bôchetel, the French Ambassador, and ostentatiously condoled with him for the disrespect shown to his sovereign. She rather overdid the pity, and suggested that she should arbitrate between the King and the Huguenots, but would take care that no help was given to the latter from England. Bôchetel dryly thanked her for the assurance that she would not help rebels *again*, but said that his King was quite able to deal with his subjects without her assistance. Here, as in the case of Mary Stuart, Elizabeth's first feeling was indignation at any disrespect being shown to a sovereign; but Cecil's letter to Norris at the time (November 3, 1567) shows that he and his friends looked at the matter from

another point of view,[1] which Elizabeth herself shortly afterwards adopted, as she had done in the case of the Queen of Scots. In the meanwhile the Council became daily more outspoken in favour of the Huguenots. Messages of encouragement went speeding across the Channel to Coligny, to Montgomerie, and the rest of the Huguenot leaders. Cecil himself took Archbishop Parker to task for his leniency to Bishop Thirlby and Dr. Boxall, who were in his custody for recusancy; and at the end of November the official blindness as to people attending mass in London came to an end. The English people who had worshipped undisturbed in the Spanish Ambassador's chapel were suddenly arrested, and many of them sent to prison.[2] On the same day Cecil complained to Guzman that he had promoted the breaking of the law by persuading Englishmen to attend mass, and repeated other sinister reports about him. The Spaniard denied the charges, and warned Cecil that, although his present attitude might be prompted by patriotic motives, it was a dangerous one, "and that some people were casting the responsibility upon him (Cecil), for the purpose of making him unpopular."

[1] "Her Majesty much dislikes of the Prince of Condé and the French Lords. The (English) Council do all they can to cover the same. Her Majesty, being a Prince herself, is doubtful to give comfort to subjects. You (Norris), nevertheless, shall do well to comfort them as occasion shall serve" (*Scrinia Ceciliana*). The day before this was written, Guzman writes to Philip, speaking of the suspicion that exists that the Queen is helping the Huguenots, of which, however, he cannot find any confirmation: "But still I notice that when news comes favourable to the heretics, these Councillors are more pleased than otherwise, whilst they grieve if the heretics fail" (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth).

[2] Guzman's comment upon this is curious: "These heretics are so blind as to marvel why your Majesty does not allow full liberty to all in your dominions to enjoy their own opinions and schisms against the Catholic religion, and yet they themselves refuse to let people live freely in the ancient religion which for so many years they have followed without molestation."

Cecil, apparently, was not afraid of this, for he had strained the loyalty of his friends almost to breaking limits lately by the severity exercised against the anti-vestment divines and his approaches to Spain, and doubtless welcomed the change in the political position which allowed him to enforce uniformity upon Catholics as well as upon his own co-religionists. There was a talk of expelling all Catholics from the Queen's household, and Bacon, the Chancellor, made a speech in the Star Chamber directing the judges and officials to put into renewed force and press vigorously, the laws against the possession of books attacking the Protestant faith. "What most troubles the Catholics, however," writes Guzman, "is to see that Leicester has become much more confirmed in his heresy, and is followed by the Earl of Pembroke, who had been considered a Catholic. There is nobody now on the Catholic side in the Council."

The hollow negotiations, too, for the Archduke's marriage, carried on by honest Sussex in Vienna, were politely shelved; and the political pretence which Elizabeth and Cecil had kept up for so long, of a leaning towards the Catholic side, could safely be discarded until the renewed liability of England to attack from without might again call for its resumption. So far the Queen and her minister had dissembled to good purpose, for the great struggle for the faith had been diverted from England to the Continent, and the monarchs of France and Spain were both busy in suppressing the religious revolts of their own subjects.

CHAPTER IX

1568–1569

NORRIS in France, and Cecil's agents in Spain and Flanders, continued to send home alarming news of the intentions of Philip and the Guises against England. The stories were untrue, but coming from so many quarters at the same time, were evidently not invented by the senders. They were in fact set afloat by Philip, as a means of keeping England in a state of apprehension, and so preventing her from sending overt aid to the Protestants in Flanders and France. To some extent they were successful in frightening Elizabeth, evidently to Cecil's annoyance, for the Secretary at least had taken Philip's measure, and knew that his hands were full. In a letter to Lord Cobham, written in April 1568, Cecil gives expression to this feeling in the figurative language which he was in the habit of employing. Cobham, as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, had forwarded a secret proposal of some Frenchmen in Calais to seize that citadel and deliver it to the Huguenots to be held for Elizabeth. The Queen was alarmed at the boldness of the plan, but promised that she would consider it if the King of France refused her offered mediation between him and the Huguenots. Cecil writes thereupon: "It grieveth me to hold and follow the plough where the owner of the ground forbears to cast in the seed in seasonable time, and I am all the more grieved that your Lordship is in like manner discouraged. '*Moremus sepe sed nihil promorèmus.*' But

besides the plough your Lordship follows, we are occupied with another, meaning to join both together for surety, but still I despair of seed." [1]

In the meanwhile, though Elizabeth herself was still overshadowed by the traditional might of Spain, the English Catholics were feeling, by the increased severity exercised towards them, the changed political situation. The English minister, and in her stronger moments the English Queen, were speaking more firmly now than ever they had dared to do since Elizabeth's accession. For the first time the position was becoming defined. It was no longer France or Spain nationally that was the enemy of England: it was Catholic against Protestant the world over. Philip was as nervously anxious to avoid war as Elizabeth herself, and his need to do so much greater than hers; but if Protestantism was allowed to become strong, then his great empire must crumble, and the basis of his system disappear. His own slow stolidity had been in a great measure the cause of his finding himself in so unfavourable a tactical position, for he had allowed the champions of the autonomous rights of his Flemish dominions—rights which at first he might easily have conciliated with his own sovereignty—to obtain for their cause the immense added impetus of religious reform. It was this fact which had changed the situation; and it was accentuated in England by the activity of the Pope (Pius V.) in establishing English seminaries abroad; and by means of money and busy agents in England itself, raising the spirits of those who clung to the old faith.[2]

[1] This second "plough" was probably an arrangement to subsidise Murray to send a privateer naval force to intercept some of Philip's vessels conveying a number of Flemish nobles to Spain, amongst others Count de Buren, the young son of the Prince of Orange.

[2] Dr. Allen had recently established the English seminary at Douai, and a Dr. Wilson was apprehended in March 1568 for collecting money from

The answer to the effervescence thus caused amongst the Catholics was the renewed harshness against them by the English ministers and the rising aggressiveness of the Protestants. Late in February 1568, Cecil sent word to Guzman, with whom he was still ostensibly on friendly terms, to say that the Queen had learnt casually that the English Ambassador in Madrid (Dr. Man) was not allowed to hold Protestant service in the embassy. She was surprised at this, and had sent to the Ambassador orders to demand the same rights as were accorded to Guzman in England; if these were denied she would recall him. Cecil himself was more outspoken and indignant than usual, and much more so than the Queen. "They think, no doubt, that the present troubles in France and elsewhere," writes Guzman, "give them a good opportunity of gaining ground, their own affairs being favourable; so they have begun to look out more keenly, and to trouble the Catholics, summoning some and arresting others, and warning them to obey the present laws . . . they (the Council) soon change her (the Queen), and all their efforts are directed at making her shy of me."[1] Guzman's messenger to Madrid travelled more quickly than Cecil's, and before Dr. Man could demand his right to enjoy Protestant service, he was unceremoniously hustled out of Madrid, without obtaining audience of the King, the pretext being that he had in public conversation at his own table insulted the Catholic faith.[2] Though Philip took

English Catholics for the seminary at Louvain. Cecil himself, in his essay on the "Execution of Justice," mentions the large number of papal emissaries in England at this time. Thomas Heath, brother of the Archbishop, and Faithful Cummin, a Dominican monk, were both arrested during this spring for carrying on a Catholic propaganda under the guise of Puritan Nonconformists. (See Strype's Parker, &c.).

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

[2] He was said to have called the Pope a "canting little monk." Amongst those who testified against him was Gresham's agent Huggins, who afterwards became one of Cecil's spies in Spain, and betrayed both sides.

this strong course, he was as anxious as ever to avoid an open quarrel with England about that or anything else, and sent all sorts of conciliatory messages to the Queen. Dr. Man, he said, had behaved himself so outrageously that his further stay in Spain was impossible; but if another Ambassador were sent who would act as English Ambassadors always had done, he should be received with open arms.

The news arrived in London at a bad time. A Portuguese Ambassador had just come (May 1568) to complain —"brawling," as Cecil calls it—of the Hawkins expeditions to Guinea. He went to the audience with Guzman, and found the Queen in a towering rage about a scurrilous letter referring to her, written by the Cardinal Prince Dom Henrique. Cecil had obtained possession of the letter somehow, and produced it, saying that the presumption of the Portuguese was insufferable and made them hated by all nations. The matter of the letter quite overshadowed the grievance about trade, as it no doubt was intended to do, and the Portuguese got no redress. On the contrary, Cecil called to him some Spanish residents in London who accompanied the Ambassador to Whitehall, and warned them that they might not attend mass at the embassy. What! not foreigners? asked Antonio de Guaras. No, retorted Cecil, and turned his back upon them to rejoin the Queen. The next day when Cecil saw Guzman, he complained of Alba's severity in Flanders, and of some insulting reference to Elizabeth in the "Pontifical History" of Dr. Illescas, so that when Dr. Man's letter arrived immediately afterwards announcing his practical expulsion from Spain, everything was prepared for an explosion. The Queen received the news with some alarm as to what it might portend, and was at first inclined to be conciliatory; but when Guzman visited Cecil in the Strand two or three days afterwards,

he found the Secretary in a fit of anger unusual with him. Such treatment of an Ambassador, he said, was an unheard-of insult to his mistress, unless it was meant as a provocation to war. After storming for some time, he stopped for want of breath; and it needed all Guzman's suavity to calm him. "I waited a little for him to recover from his rage, and then went up to him, laughing, and embraced him, saying that I was amused to see him fly into such a passion over what I had told him, because I knew that he understood differently. The affair, I said, might be made good or bad as the Queen liked to make it."[1] But Cecil was not easily appeased. He told Guzman that the Council regarded him with suspicion, that Englishmen were treated harshly in Spain, and much more to the same effect, all of which was very surprising to the Spaniard, who was unused to such plain speaking from him. But in the ten years that Elizabeth had sat upon the throne, things had radically changed. Cecil could afford to speak boldly to Spain now; for whilst England had grown enormously in wealth, commerce, industry, and shipping, under a prudent, patriotic Government, both the great rivals she formerly feared were rent by the religious schism which the folly or ambition of their rulers had precipitated upon them, and England at any given moment could paralyse either of them for harm by smiling upon their Protestant subjects.

Whilst Mary was in Lochleven Castle, Murray's enemies, the Hamiltons and the Catholics, were busy. Murray had tried his best by severity to reduce the country to something approaching order, and the turbulent chiefs who profited by anarchy resented it. The compromising papers which implicated the ruling powers in the late deeds of murder and violence were burnt,

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, vol. ii.

though not those that implicated the Queen,[1] and the whole of the responsibility was cast upon the Queen and Bothwell. Religious uniformity was passed by Parliament, and the exercise of Catholic worship abolished. All this violent action, too rapid and too partial to be readily assimilated by a country so profoundly divided as Scotland was, naturally caused reaction in favour of Mary, and when after one unsuccessful attempt she escaped from prison (2nd May), there were friends in plenty to flock to her banner. The day before her flight she had written the fervent prayer to Elizabeth, swearing unchanging fidelity to her if she would send her help[2]—help for which she had besought Catharine de Medici in vain; for France wanted the alliance of Scotland, not that of Mary Stuart personally. The day after, when Mary, surrounded by Hamiltons, was free again, the possibilities were all changed. Mary Stuart turned in a few hours from the humble suppliant to the haughty sovereign. Her abdication was revoked, Murray's regency declared illegal, and all his acts annulled. Beton was sent off post-haste to London and Paris to demand for his mistress a thousand harquebussiers and a sum of money. Beton's instructions were to tell the English Government that if they would not send the help, he was to demand it from the French. Cecil writes to Norris,[3] 16th May, that under these circumstances the Queen had promised all that Mary demanded; but he was to keep his eye on Beton, and if he asked for French aid, Catharine was to be told the message he brought from Mary to London. Before Beton left London he went to see Guzman with a verbal message from Mary. 'Now that she was free, she said, she would show the world how

[1] Drury to Cecil, 28th November 1567 (State Papers, Scotland).

[2] In Labanoff, vol. ii. Copy in Hatfield Papers, part i., and Haynes.

[3] *Scrinia Ceciliana.*

innocent she was, and begged for the advice and help of Guzman and his master. She was a firmer Catholic than ever, she averred; nearly all the people and nobles of Scotland were on her side; but she complained that she was in the field without proper garb or adornments, and begged Guzman to send a request to the Duke of Alba to seize her jewels and restore them to her, if Murray sent them to Flanders for sale.[1]

This was on the 11th May. Two days afterwards the result of the battle of Langside once more cast the unhappy Mary Stuart into the chasm of irredeemable misfortune, and on the 16th she fled across the Solway a fugitive to England, to see her country no more in life. Such a step as this was tempting fate. It is true that Elizabeth had constantly professed sympathy for her in her captivity; but whilst the English Queen's words were fair, the acts of her Government, dictated not by personal motives, such as the friends of Mary have absurdly tried to fix upon Cecil, but by high national policy, had been uniformly in favour of Murray and the Protestants. Mary's attitude, moreover, had from the first, and not unnaturally, been favourable to the French alliance, upon which for centuries Scotland had depended for the preservation of its independence; and to place herself thus unconditionally at the mercy of the English, whose policy she had opposed and whose interests she sought to subvert, was little short of an act of madness. Mary had no excuse for trusting to a Quixotic generosity, of which Elizabeth had never given her the slightest indication beyond conventional fine words, such as would hardly deceive Mary. It was not so much that she overrated her generosity as she underrated her boldness.

[1] It is possible that these jewels may be those referred to in a memorandum at Hatfield, of the date 17th May, in Cecil's writing, as having been bought from one Felton.

Drury in Berwick had kept Cecil informed almost from hour to hour of the course of events in Scotland;[1] and a few hours only after Mary landed at Workington she wrote her famous and oft-quoted letter to the English Queen. In it she recites her sorrows, and begs Elizabeth to aid her in her just quarrel; but, above all, to send for her as soon as possible, "for I am in a pitiable condition, not only for a Queen but a gentlewoman." The position was a difficult one for the English Queen and Council. Guzman says they were much perplexed, "as the Queen has always shown good-will to the Queen of Scots, and the majority of the Council has been opposed to her, and favourable to the Regent and his government. If this Queen has her way, they will have to treat Mary as a sovereign, which will offend those who forced her to abdicate; so that although these folks are glad enough to have her in their hands, they have many things to consider . . . if she remain free, and able to communicate with her friends, great suspicions will arise. In any case it is certain that the two women will not agree very long together."[3]

When Mary had arrived at Carlisle a few days afterwards, she sent Lord Herries to London with a letter for Cecil, which may be given in full. Mary's letters were always clever, unless she lost her temper, as she did sometimes, and here it will be seen that she appeals to positively the only feeling which it was probable would move Cecil to favour her, namely, her kinship to his mistress and her regal status. "Mester Ceciles," runs the letter, "L'équité, dont vous avvez le nom d'estre amateur, et la fidelle et sincère servitude que portez a

[1] Drury to Cecil, 15th May, describing Langside (Cotton MSS., Caligula, c. i.)., &c.

[2] Mary to Elizabeth (*ibid.*).

[3] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

la Royne, Madame ma bonne sœur, et par consequent a toutes celles qui sont de son sang, et en pareille dignité, me fayt en ma juste querele, par sur tous autres m'adresser a vous en ce temps de mon trouble pour etre avancée par votre bon conseille, que j'ai commandé Lord Heris, presant porteur vous fayre entandre au long. . . . De Karlile ce xxviii Mey. Votre bien bonne amye Marie R."[1] With this letter Herries brought others for the Pope and Guzman. He demanded aid for his mistress on a pledge sent to her by Elizabeth through Throgmorton in the form of a ring, and when some hesitation was shown, he imprudently blurted out that if Elizabeth did not keep her word his mistress would appeal to France, Spain, the Emperor, and the Pope. "The Pope!" exclaimed puritan Bedford, shocked at the idea. "Yes, the Pope," replied Herries, "or the Grand Turk, or the Sophi, or any one else who will help her." This sort of talk was sufficient to decide Mary's removal to Bolton as a measure of precaution.

Before this took place, however, Lord Scrope and Sir Francis Knollys had been deputed by Elizabeth to visit and confer with Mary at Carlisle. Herries on that occasion had said that if the English would not help his Queen, she wished to go to France; "whereupon," writes Knollys, we "answered that your Highness could in no wise lyke hyr sekyng aide in France, therbie to bring Frenchmen into Skotland;"[1] and, continued the envoys, the Queen of England could not receive her personally until she was satisfied of her innocence in the murder of her husband. Mary was just as imprudent as Herries in her interview with the English envoys; but what frightened Knollys most was the large number of her English sympathisers in the north of England. In his letter to Elizabeth he points out the danger of

[1] Cotton MSS., Caligula, c. i.

the situation, and suggests that Mary should have the choice of freely returning to Scotland, if she chose, or of remaining in England; but not of going to France, as she evidently wished to do. "She was so agile and spirited," says Knollys, that she could only be kept a prisoner so near the Border by very rigorous means, such as "devices of towels and toyes at her chamber window"; whereas to carry her farther inland might cause "serious sedition."

Elizabeth and her Council decided to run the latter risk rather than that Mary should go to France to be a permanent thorn in the flesh of England, and the Queen of Scots' long imprisonment commenced.[1] Even in the first few weeks of her stay she was busy endeavouring to subvert English ends; appointing Chatelherault, Argyll, and Huntly to the supreme government of the kingdom against Murray; Chatelherault being strongly in the French interest, and daily clamouring through his brother in Paris for French armed support. All this was known to the Queen and Cecil; and Mary's intemperate letters of protest against her removal from Carlisle, and her constant threats to appeal to France and Spain if Elizabeth would not help her,[2] made it

[1] See Cecil's letters to Norris of this period, detailing the discussions which this gave rise to in the Council. Cecil's whole efforts were directed against preventing French troops being sent to Scotland at any cost. In Cecil's own memoranda (Harl. MSS., 4653), when Mary first entered England, this is the main point dwelt upon. No person was to see Mary without permission of the English guard, all the known accomplices of Darnley's murder were to be arrested, all interference of the French was to be prevented, and if it was decided to restore Mary, it was only to be on conditions which insured the exclusion of the French. The summing up of the document consists of a statement of the dangers that would ensue to England if Mary were to be allowed to return to France, or if, on the other hand, she remained in England. At this time Cecil was in favour of Mary's restoration under the strict tutelage of England.

[2] See letters 21st June, &c., Hatfield Papers (*in extenso* in Haynes), and 13th June and 5th July, Cotton MSS., Caligula, c. i.

altogether inconsistent with prudence to allow the misguided woman her liberty. The investigation into Mary's guilt or innocence seems to have originated with Cecil.[1] Left to herself, Elizabeth, as we have seen, was mainly influenced by the personal feeling of reverence for a sovereign : Cecil could not oppose this, and as usual took an indirect means of reaching his end. When Mary complained to Knollys at Carlisle of the subjects who had dethroned her, he had told her that as it was lawful for subjects to depose mad sovereigns, it was also lawful for them to depose those who had lost their wits to the extent of conniving at murder. Mary wept at this, and Knollys softened the blow ; but Knollys had certainly seen Cecil's report, and took the line suggested by it. If Mary could be shown to have connived at Darnley's death—and Cecil must have known of the damning proofs against her when he proposed the negotiation—the regal immunity fell from her like a loosened garment, and Elizabeth's personal desire to consider the sacredness of the monarch before the interests of the country lost its principal resting point.

In the meanwhile the state of civil war in Scotland continued, and news came daily of French armaments preparing to aid Mary's party. Cecil ceaselessly urged an armistice, and at last (1st September) was successful, though imprudent Herries continued to threaten that if Elizabeth did not restore the Queen of Scots to the throne in two months, she and her friends would appeal only to France for armed aid. Elizabeth clearly could not force Mary upon the Scottish people, and for her interference to be effective she must be recognised as a mediator, not by Mary alone, but also by Murray and his party. This was difficult ; for Murray knew that

[1] See Cecil's report and recommendations, Harl. MSS., 4653.

if the final result was to restore Mary with any power at all, he and his party sooner or later were doomed. Thanks mainly to the efforts of Cecil, Murray at last gave way, and the commissions of Scotch and English Councillors were sent to York, ostensibly to mediate between the Queen of Scots and her subjects. But Mary found herself no longer, as she had hoped to be, the accuser of Murray, but practically on her own trial for murder. By a remark in a letter from Cecil to Norris at the time, he seems again with some difficulty to have avoided being appointed a commissioner himself.

Whilst the intricate and obscure proceedings in York[1] were progressing, Cecil's hands were full in London. Protestant zeal was fairly aflame now at Alba's proceedings in the Netherlands. All eastern England swarmed with Flemish fugitives, many of whom found their way back home again well armed with weapons bought in England, and even more with messages of indignant sympathy from English Protestants. Guzman protested to Cecil again and again, but could get no more than vague half promises, and once a proclamation, which the Spaniards described as a "compliment rather than a remedy."

In September the mild and diplomatic Guzman

[1] A journal of the proceedings made by the English president, the Duke of Norfolk, is at Hatfield, part i. (No. 1200), and many letters on the subject *in extenso* in Haynes. In November the sittings were transferred to Westminster. On the 30th October a Council was held at Hampton Court, at which the "casket letters" were considered, and it was decided that Mary's representatives, the Bishop of Ross and Lord Herries, should first have audience of Elizabeth. They were to be so questioned as to "move them to confess their general authority to answer all charges." The representatives of the Lords, Maitland and MacGill, were then to be introduced and asked what answer they could give to Mary's accusations, and why, in face of the letters they produced, they refrained from charging the Queen openly with murder. It was decided in the Council to remove Mary from Bolton to Tutbury. (See Minutes in Cecil's hand, Hatfield Papers, part i. 1203–1205; *in extenso* in Haynes.)

was withdrawn, much to Elizabeth's apprehension, and Cecil's regret, and an Ambassador of very different calibre was sent. For many years the warlike party in Philip's councils, led by Alba, had been urging him to active hostility towards England, but the peace party of Ruy Gomez had prevented the advice from being adopted. Now that Alba was supreme in the Netherlands, and reported that the Protestant revolt was mainly fed from England, Philip seems to have decided to alarm Elizabeth into neutrality by sending a rough-tongued representative. He had felt his ground first by his contemptuous treatment of Dr. Man, and seeing that Elizabeth had taken it quietly, he sent as his new Ambassador a turbulent bigoted Catalan, named Gerau de Spes, to endeavour by truculence to do what the suavity of Guzman had failed to effect. Dutch, Huguenot, and English privateers were preying upon Spanish shipping, to an extent which well-nigh cut off communication by sea between Spain and northern Europe. Money and arms, unchecked, found their way from England to the brave "beggars" in Holland; and though Philip did not wish to fight England, it was vital for him to paralyse her for harm. Mary Stuart had written to Philip from Carlisle, begging him for help against Elizabeth, and the chance seemed to Philip a good one to disturb England for his own ends, without war. He accordingly wrote cautiously to Alba (15th September), saying that he was willing to help Mary, but desired Alba to report upon what might be done to that end, whilst sending reassuring promises to the Queen of Scots.[1] From the first hour that De Spes set foot in England, he went beyond his instructions and conspired actively against the Government to which he was accredited.

There was more even than this untoward change

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

to occupy the thoughts and hands of Elizabeth's first minister. The war had raged in France between the Huguenots and the Catholics from September 1567 till the clever management of Catharine had beguiled the Protestants to accept the hollow peace of Longjumeau (March 1568). Hans Casimir and his mercenary Germans went home; the Huguenots laid down their arms; and then again the Catholic pulpits thundered forth that it was godly to break faith with heretics, and that the blood shed of unbelievers sent up sweet incense to heaven. Nearly 10,000 Huguenots were treacherously slain in three months, and no punishment could be obtained against the murderers. Condé and Coligny fled to the stronghold of La Rochelle, there to be joined by the Queen of Navarre with 4000 men-at-arms, and all that was strong and warlike on the side of the Huguenots. Elizabeth in the autumn was making a progress through the valley of the Thames when she heard that Cardinal Chatillon[1] had escaped from Tréport, and had arrived in England and desired an audience. Lord Cobham, Warden of the Cinque Ports, made much of him when he landed; Gresham entertained him; the French Ambassador, himself inclined to be a Huguenot, honoured him as if he were a prince; and as soon as the Queen's answer was received, Chatillon hurried down to Newbury to prefer his request to the Queen. He looked little of a cardinal or a churchman, for he dressed in cape, hat, and sword, and his wife joined him, but that perhaps made him all the more welcome. Throgmorton voices the general idea in a letter to Cecil. "I think," he says, "with you, that it is a special favour of God to preserve this realm from calamities by their neighbours' troubles. . . . If her Majesty suffer the Low Countries and France to be

[1] Odet de Coligny, brother of the Admiral of France.

weeded of the members of the Church whereof England is also a portion, I see no other thing can happen but a more grievous accident to us than to those whom we have suffered to be destroyed."[1]

But it is quite clear that neither the Queen nor Cecil intended to allow the Huguenots to be destroyed. The Cardinal was received with open arms, munitions were brought from the Tower in hot haste, and a strong fleet was fitted out to carry aid to Huguenots in Rochelle. The French Ambassador might be half a Huguenot, but his brother the Bishop of Rennes was not, and he came and protested strongly in the name of Catharine against Chatillon's reception in England. Cecil tells Norris in Paris that he got a very short answer. "I told him," says Cecil, "we had more cause to favour him (Chatillon) and all such, because the said Cardinal Lorraine was known to be an open enemy of our sovereign. So he departed with no small misliking, and I well contented to utter some round speeches."[2] But, prudent as usual, Cecil was a stickler for legality, and took care that appearances were kept up. The Cardinal, he insisted, was a faithful subject of his King; it was the Guises who were the enemies. Norris is directed to tell Catharine that the fleet is "to protect our Burdeaux fleet from pyrats"; and if any complaint is made about money and munitions of war being provided for Chatillon, he is to say that the Queen would never do anything against the French King, but if English merchants made bargains with the Huguenots, he (Cecil) knew of no way to stop it. He certainly made no attempt to do so; for with a great civil war on hand it was clear that France could not resort to arms for the cause of Mary Stuart; and whilst mediatory proceedings were dragging on in

[1] Hatfield State Papers, 18th September 1568.
[2] 28th October (*Scrinia Ceciliana*).

England, the Protestant cause in Scotland was being consolidated.

The unhappy Queen of Scots herself, persuaded that no help could just now reach her from her French kinsmen, seems to have depended almost entirely upon the aid to be given by the King of Spain and Alba to the Scottish Catholics. No messenger came from her to London without beseeching secret letters in cipher to the Spanish Ambassador; and whilst the trial dragged on, she left no stone unturned to arouse indignation against Murray and the English. They wished to kill her child, she said, and force the reformed faith upon her and Scotland. In an intercepted letter to one of the Hamiltons, which fell into Cecil's hands,[1] she says that Dumbarton, with Murray's consent, was to be seized by the English. Elizabeth had, she averred, promised to sustain Murray, to recognise his legitimacy, and raise him to the throne as her vassal; both of these being accusations which were likely to move the Hamiltons to fury. But, above all, she accused Cecil of a deeper plot still. He had arranged, she said, to marry one of his daughters to the Earl of Hertford, father of Catharine Grey's young heir, and thus, by mutual support, Hertford's son and Murray might occupy respectively the English and Scottish thrones under Cecil's tutelage. "So they will both be bent on my son's death." There was no truth in it; but it was an excellent invention to arouse the ire of the Scottish Catholics. Before even this was written (December), Cecil knew how bitter was Mary's feeling against him. When Beton came to London from Mary in October, with secret messages for De Spes, suggesting her escape, "which will not be difficult, or even to raise a revolt against this Queen," Cecil guessed his real errand, and, says De Spes, "Cecil

[1] Hatfield Papers, part i. 1237.

is so much against the Queen of Scotland, and so jealous in the matter, that as soon as he saw Beton he asked him whether he had been with his complaints to the Spanish Ambassador, and whether he came to see me often; to which Beton replied that he had no dealings whatever with me."[1]

But Cecil's spies were everywhere, and he knew that De Spes was working ceaselessly in Mary's interests to bring disaster upon England, in union with his chief, the Duke of Alba, in Flanders. The great difficulty in the way of the Spaniards was the extreme penury of the treasury. Spain was in the very depths of poverty, its commerce well-nigh killed by unwise fiscal arrangements and the depredations of the privateers, against whom De Spes inveighed to Cecil constantly, but in vain, though the Secretary was strongly against piracy on principle. Flanders desolated with war, Holland and Zeeland in revolt, were no longer the milch-cows for the Spaniards that they had been, and Alba, with an unpaid and rebellious soldiery, was in despair of subduing Orange, much less of crushing England, unless large sums of money were forthcoming. Philip made a great effort in the autumn of 1568, and borrowed a large sum of money from the Genoese bankers to supply Alba with the sinews of war. The money was to be conveyed by sea to Flanders at the risk of the bankers. Three of the vessels duly arrived in Antwerp, after having been chased by Huguenot privateers; but several others put into Southampton, Plymouth, and Falmouth, to escape from their pursuers. The representative in England of the bankers was the Genoese Benedict Spinola, who requested De Spes to ask the Queen to allow the money to be discharged and brought overland to Dover, where it could be transhipped under convoy for the Duke of Alba. De Spes

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

saw the Queen on the 29th November, and she consented to this course being adopted.

In the meanwhile the privateers, in crowds, were clustered outside the harbours where the rich treasure lay, and nearly every Spanish ship that entered the Channel fell into their hands. De Spes had not been sent by Philip to provoke war, but in the few months that he had been in England his violence, insolence, and bigotry had brought war nearer than ever it had been before. Norris in Paris had just been warned, and had sent the warning to Cecil, that a plot was formed to kill the Queen, and that the papal banker Ridolfi, De Spes, and the English Catholic nobility, headed by the Earl of Arundel, had agreed to place Mary Stuart on the English throne. De Spes was closeted day and night with Mary's agents. "The Bishop of Ross came at midnight to offer me the good-will of his mistress and many gentlemen of this country. . . . The Queen of Scotland told my servant to convey to me the following words: 'Tell the Ambassador that if his master will help me I shall be Queen of England in three months, and mass shall be said all over the country.'"[1]

Condé's agents, too, were for ever telling the Queen and Cecil of the plans against England of the Guises and Alba, as soon as the Protestants in France and Flanders had been subjugated; and Knollys wrote almost despairingly from Bolton of Mary's haughty disbelief in Elizabeth's power to harm her.[2] There need, therefore, be no surprise that the English Council began to question the wisdom of allowing the treasure that had fallen into their power to be used against the tranquillity and independence of their own country. When De Spes asked Cecil for the safe conducts for the money, he was put off

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, vol. ii.

[2] Hatfield Papers, part i. No. 1243.

with vague evasions, whilst the main question was being discussed. After much pressing, Cecil gave the safe conducts, and sent orders to Plymouth and Falmouth (13th December, N.S.) that the shore authorities were to defend the treasure-ships, which were being threatened by pirates, even in port. "These orders are now being sent off," writes De Spes, "but in all things Cecil showed himself an enemy to the Catholic cause, and desirous on every opportunity of opposing the interests of your Majesty. . . . He has to be dealt with by prayers and gentle threats."[1] "The Council is sitting night and day about the Queen of Scotland's affairs. Cecil and the Chancellor (Bacon) would like to see her dead, as they have a King of their own choosing, one of Hertford's children."[1]

After deliberation, Cecil had sent for Bernard Spinola, and ascertained from him that the money was being conveyed at the bankers' risk, and could not legally be called King Philip's property.[2] This seems to have decided the question. The money on the cutter in Southampton harbour was discharged, on the pretext of protecting it from pirates;[3] and as soon as De Spes got the news, on the 20th December, he went to

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

[2] Spinola had been concerned in John Hawkins' ventures, and it has usually been assumed that he had already received from his correspondents in Spain news of the attack on Hawkins' fleet at St. Juan de Ulloa two months before. It is asserted that the seizure of the treasure was urged upon Cecil as a reprisal for this. I am of opinion that such was not the case, as the seizure of the money was under consideration before it was possible for the affair of St. Juan de Ulloa to be known.

[3] The safe conduct for the money sent to the ports by De Spes was closely followed by contrary orders from the Council to Sir William Horsey at Southampton, and Champernoun at Plymouth, and the treasure was landed in accordance therewith. On the 13th December, William Hawkins wrote to Cecil from Plymouth with rumours of the attack on John Hawkins at St. Juan de Ulloa, but the seizure must have been decided upon before Cecil received the letter.

the Queen in a violent rage to demand its return. He only saw Cecil, who said the money was safe, but hinted that it did not belong to the King. De Spes then gave the bad advice to Alba to retaliate by seizing all English property in the Netherlands, which was done, and Cecil was provided with a pretext which gave him what he always needed, a good legal position to justify his acts. The Queen had not hitherto plainly said that she would keep the money; but as soon as she heard that Alba had seized English property, it gave her the required excuse for doing so. Her credit was as good as Philip's, she said, and she would borrow it herself. Not only 400,000 crowns in gold, but every scrap of Spanish property in England was seized, enormously in excess of all English property in Flanders. In vain De Spes hectored and stormed, in vain Alba alternately threatened and implored, in vain Philip made seizures of Englishmen and goods in Spain; the Queen was in an unassailable position. Alba had openly declared the seizures of English property first, and all Elizabeth had done was to adopt reprisals afterwards. But it crippled Alba and Philip almost to exhaustion, and well-nigh ruined Spanish commerce and killed Spanish credit.

For years open and secret negotiations went on to obtain some restoration of the enormous amount of Spanish property seized. Cajolery, bribery, and appeals to English honour were resorted to without effect; private negotiations were opened by the owners of the property to get partial restitution on any terms; envoy after envoy was sent, and returned home empty-handed. The Queen refused to acknowledge Alba or his agents in any form, and Cecil was immovable in his determination that no arrangement should be made that did not bring into account all the confiscations and persecutions that had ever been suffered by English in Spain at the hands of the Inquisition, which he knew was impossible. In the

meanwhile the property dwindled and was jobbed away, and little, if any, ever eventually reached its proper owners.

Early in January the Queen refused to receive De Spes, and sent Cecil and the Lord Admiral, attended by a large train, and the aldermen of the city, to see him at his house. Cecil, as usual, was the spokesman. He was angry and severe: upbraided the Ambassador for his bad offices; condemned the cruelty of the Duke of Alba, and his insolence in seizing English property; and ended by placing De Spes and all his household under arrest, in the custody of Henry Knollys, Arthur Carew, and Sir Henry Knyvett. The reason of this was that a violent letter from De Spes to Alba had been intercepted by Cecil's orders. To make matters worse, the foolish Ambassador, whilst under arrest, wrote an insolent letter to Alba complaining of his treatment, and sent it open to the Council. In it he says that "Cecil is harsh and arrogant; that he vapoured about religion, dragged up the matter of John Man and about Bishop Quadra's affairs, and, in short, did and said a thousand impertinent things. He thinks he is dealing with Englishmen, who all tremble before him. . . . The question of the money does not suit him. I beg your Excellency not to refrain on my account from doing everything that the interests and dignity of the King demand; for whilst Cecil rules, I do not believe there will ever be lasting peace. It is a pity so excellent a Queen should give credit to so scandalous a person as this. God send a remedy; for in this country, people great and small are discontented with the Government. . . . Cecil is having a proclamation drawn up, from which he leaves out what is most important, and misstates the case. He refused to return my packet, and is getting one Somers to decipher my letters. If he succeeds I will pardon him."[1] The transmission of this insolent letter, open to the Council, to be sent to Alba,

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

produced the effect that might have been expected. De Spes was asked to explain what he meant by such offensive expressions against the Government, and by some scurrilous references employed in another intercepted letter towards the Queen. He tried to attenuate his insolence towards the Queen, and the Council as a whole, but not that towards Cecil personally.

And so affairs drifted from bad to worse. Every letter from De Spes to Alba and the King was full of abuse of Cecil, and statements of the determination of the English Catholics to shake off his tyranny and raise Mary Stuart to the throne. The people are all discontented, he says, and the slightest show of countenance from Philip will enable Elizabeth and the detested Cecil to be overthrown. Philip did not know what to think of it, and sent to Alba orders to inquire independently whether De Spes' representations were true. If it is so easy, he says, he is willing to give the aid required, as after his duty to maintain the holy faith in his own dominions, it is incumbent upon him to re-establish it in England. "If you think the chance will be lost by again waiting to consult me, you may at once take the steps you consider advisable."[1] Alba soon undeceived the King. He had his hands full in the Netherlands; he was almost without money; rash and foolish De Spes, he knew, was not to be depended upon, and he told Philip plainly that he must temporise and make friends with Elizabeth, leaving vengeance until later. De Spes, he thought, was being deceived, perhaps betrayed, by Ridolfi and the Catholics, and open war with England must be avoided at any cost. Cecil, indeed, had accurately gauged the situation, and knew far better than De Spes that Philip dared not fight, now that the Prince of Orange was holding Holland and Zeeland

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

against him. England's traditional alliance was not with the House of Spain, but with the possessor of the Netherlands, and in the same proportion as Spain lost control over the Low Countries, the need for a close union with her shifted.

Late in February the Duke of Norfolk, and his father-in-law, the Earl of Arundel, to whom the changed situation was not so clear as to Cecil, sent Ridolfi to De Spes with a cipher communication to tell him that the money and Spanish property should be returned.[1] "They had only consented to my detention and Cecil's other impertinences, because they were not yet strong enough to resist him. But they were gathering friends, and were letting the public know what was going on, in the hope and belief that they will be able to turn out the present accursed Government and raise up another Catholic one, bringing the Queen to consent thereto. They think your Excellency (Alba) will support them in this, and that the country will not lose the friendship of our King. They say they will return to the Catholic religion, and they think a better opportunity never existed than now. Although Cecil thinks he has them all under his heel, he will find few or none of them stand by him. I have encouraged them. . . . In the meanwhile Cecil is bravely harrying the Catholics, imprisoning many, for nearly all the prisons are full. The Spaniards (*i.e.* from the arrested ships) are in Bridewell to the number of over 150, and a minister is sent to preach to them." This gives us a clue to the real origin of the plot against Cecil, which his domestic biographer absurdly ascribes to a noble member of the Council having seen upon his table a book attacking aristocracy.[2]

[1] The seizure of Spanish property had greatly alarmed the English merchants and bankers, and was the pretext seized upon by Cecil's enemies to ruin him.

[2] *Desiderata Curiosa.*

Rapin is nearer in guessing the cause of the conspiracy in ascribing it to Norfolk, Winchester, Pembroke, Leicester, Northumberland, Westmoreland, and Arundel, in favour of Mary Stuart's claim, at least to the succession, in opposition to Cecil's candidate, Catharine Grey's son, Lord Beauchamp. Camden records that Throgmorton, Leicester's henchman, advocated the lodging of Cecil in the Tower first. "If he were once shut up, men would open their mouths to speak freely against him."[1] As will be seen, however, Cecil was more than a match for his jealous enemies, who were also the enemies of England; and the Queen, to her honour, stood bravely up for her great minister.[2] The plan agreed upon was for Norfolk, a cat's-paw of Leicester, to denounce Cecil for his supposed intention of forcing the succession of Beauchamp, and provoking war with Spain by advocating the seizure of Philip's treasure; but Leicester, too unstable, even, to keep the counsel

[1] Fuller's "Holy State."

[2] How moderate and cautious Cecil was in his triumph, after he had discovered and apprised the Queen of the plot to ruin him, and had barely escaped the dagger of the hired assassin who was to kill him, is seen in his subsequent demeanour towards the conspirators. Instead of trying to disgrace or punish them, he continued to work loyally with them. The real prime mover in the plot was Leicester, with whom outwardly Cecil was always friendly. Cecil, writing to a friend at the time, thus expresses himself: "I am in quietness of mind, as feeling the nearness and readiness of God's favour to assist me with His grace, to have a disposition to serve Him before the world; and therein have I lately proved His mere goodness to preserve me from some clouds or mists, in the midst whereof I trust mine honest actions are proved to have been lightsome and clear. And to make this rule more proper, I find the Queen's Majesty, my gracious lady, without change of her old good meaning towards me, and so I trust by God's goodness to observe a continuance. I also am moved to believe that all my Lords, from the greatest to the meanest, think my actions honest and painful, and do profess inwardly to bear me as much good-will as ever they did." That this was the case, at least with one of the conspirators, is proved by the fact that Lord Pembroke, who died at the end of the year, left Cecil one of his executors, jointly with Leicester and Throgmorton.

of his own plot, dropped a hint to the Queen, who warned Cecil, and the whole nefarious conspiracy was unveiled. The excuse given by Norfolk and Arundel to De Spes for their failure was that so many Councillors were interested in the plunder that they could not get them to move against Cecil. "For my part," says De Spes, "I believe that they have very little courage, and in the usual English way wish things to be so far advanced that they can with but little trouble win your Majesty's rewards and favours."

On the strength of their intentions against Cecil, Arundel, with his sons-in-law, Norfolk and Lumley, tried their hardest to get some money from De Spes, but without effect until the northern rebellion was in preparation. Their intermediary was a Florentine banker, whose brother-in-law, Cavalcanti, was one of Cecil's agents, and through him every step was known to the Secretary. Spies were everywhere. Whilst Cecil's most confidential private secretary, Allington, carried all his secrets to De Spes for a consideration,[1] no visitor went to the Spanish Embassy whose name and business was not at once reported to Cecil, who, says De Spes, was suspicious even of the birds of the air. Though Mary was in captivity, she contrived to write constant cipher letters through De Spes to the Pope, to Alba, and to Philip. The Bishop of Ross, her indefatigable but imprudent agent, took no step in Mary's cause without consultation with the Spaniard. She would, he said, have been released already but for Cecil, her great enemy in the Council.[2] If he could be got rid of, all would be well.

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

[2] Although in all her letters Mary designates Cecil as her enemy, she could, when not carried away by anger, perceive his good qualities. In February 1569 she was removed to Tutbury, and was extremely angry and alarmed at this. In conversation with Henry Knollys, who repeated the conversation to a correspondent of Cecil's (Hatfield Papers, part i. 1279),

The Bishop of Ross went so far as to solicit another husband for Mary to be chosen by Philip, and offered her abject submission both for England and Scotland, in return for aid to the coming rising in her favour. It will be seen by this that a more dangerous and widespread plot even than that against Cecil was being planned by the Catholic nobility.

At what period the first suggestion was made for a marriage between the Duke of Norfolk and Mary Stuart is not certain, but the Bishop of Ross afterwards deposed[1] that the Duke had sent his offer to the Queen before the meeting of the Commission of York (October 1568), of which he was president; and as Lady Scrope, in whose husband's house, Bolton Castle, Mary was kept, was Norfolk's sister, it is probable that the plan was hatched during her stay at Bolton. From Murray's statement[2] it appears that Norfolk had a private conference with him during the sitting of the Commission at York, when the Duke proposed to suppress the papers which incriminated Mary, in order to save the scandal of a conviction. Murray placed the evidence before the English Commissioners, and agreed to abide by Elizabeth's decision, and Norfolk at once wrote a private letter to Cecil conveying his strong impression of the Queen's guilt, but advocating the suppression of the evidence. Norfolk's conference with Murray, and probably Cecil's knowledge of the marriage plan, appears to have been the reason for the removal of the Com-

"she spared not to give forth that the Secretary was her enemy, and that she mistrusted by this removing he would cause her to be made away." But when her passion was over, she said that though the Secretary were not her friend, he was an expert, wise man, wishing it might be her luck to get the friendship of so wise a man.

[1] Hatfield Papers; *in extenso* in Haynes.

[2] Denied afterwards by Norfolk, but confirmed by Melvil. (See State Trials, and Melvil's Memoirs).

mission to London, and the employment of Norfolk elsewhere, as well as of the removal of Mary to Tutbury. When Norfolk returned to court, Elizabeth received him coldly, for the talk about his marriage with Mary was now public, and the Duke assured the Queen of the untruth of the rumours. After Murray, with real or pretended reluctance, had laid the whole of his evidence against Mary before the Commission, and the sittings had come to an end with the sole result of leaving the cloud over her head, Norfolk's plan for a time was shelved;[1] but the conspiracy of the nobles against Cecil in favour of Mary again revived the idea of the marriage; and Guzman in June 1569 says that the new Lord Dacre had mentioned the matter to him, and professed his willingness to hold in readiness 15,000 men in the north, to rise in favour of Mary if he were assured of Philip's support. De Spes asserts that Cecil had proposed to marry his widowed sister-in-law, Lady Hoby, to the Duke, a proposal which the Duke had rejected with scorn, "as his eyes were fixed upon the Queen of Scots."

By this time matters had so far advanced that a large sum of money (6000 crowns) was sent by Alba to the Catholic nobles, through Lumley and Arundel, as well as 10,000 to Mary, and the rising in the north was in principle decided upon; but Alba, whilst ready to supply money secretly, strictly enjoined De Spes to turn a deaf ear to any suggestions for overt aid against the Queen's Government.[2] His great care for the moment was to

[1] The Bishop of Ross deposed afterwards that Norfolk was so much exasperated at Murray's having finally brought forward the whole of the evidence to convict Mary of murder, that he formed a plot for his assassination. Melvil says, however, that before Murray returned to Scotland, Throgmorton had fully gained his acquiescence in the projected marriage, and had reconciled the Regent and the Duke.

[2] Alba was very angry with De Spes for the way in which he was compromising Spain. He wrote again to him in July, saying that he "was informed

repair the effects of his mistake and obtain some sort of restitution of the Spanish property seized in England. Agents were sent backwards and forwards, supple cosmopolitan Florentines mostly. Ridolfi, Fiesco, the Cavalcantis, and several others tried by bribery and other means to induce Cecil to consent to an arrangement. It suited him to pretend a willingness to do so. Ridolfi dined and conferred with him more than once on the subject at Cecil House. De Spes was released from his captivity in Paget House (on the site of the present Essex Street, Strand), and allowed to take the Bishop of Winchester's house instead; but on various pretexts, invented, as he says, by Cecil, the interminable negotiations about the restitution dragged on without much result, as Cecil evidently intended them to do. "We must have patience," De Spes writes to Alba, "but the affair is greatly injured by Cecil's having again got the upper hand in the government, without fear now that the other members may overthrow him, for he knows that they could not agree together for the purpose."[1]

Whilst Cecil was temporising about the restitution, and dallying with the Spanish agents, he kept his hand on the pulse of the Catholic Lords. Arundel and his party had arranged that De Spes should once more be admitted to the Queen's presence at Guildford, and then

from France that the Queen of Scotland was being utterly ruined by the plotting of her servants with you, as they never enter your house without being watched. This might cost the Queen her life, and I am not sure that yours would be safe." The evidence given afterwards at the Duke of Norfolk's trial, and the examinations of Bailly and the Bishop of Ross, proved that Cecil had information of everything that occurred.

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth. Alba, writing to Philip soon afterwards (8th August), says, "I have written several times to Don Gerau, telling him to suspend negotiations, as I plainly see they are tricking him, so as to get all they can from him, and then say they have negotiated without authority. He is zealous . . . but he is inexperienced; he allows himself to be led away, and is ruining the negotiation." It will be seen that it was comparatively easy for Cecil to outwit such an instrument as this.

go to a meeting of the conspirators at Nonsuch; but Cecil raised difficulties, and himself came to town specially to tell De Spes that the Queen could not receive him until he obtained fresh credentials direct from Spain. Cecil had apparently by this time (August 1569) won over the Earl of Pembroke; and Leicester himself had taken fright at the probable result of his plotting. His accomplices had gone beyond him. The rise of Norfolk and Mary under a Catholic regime would of course have meant extinction for Leicester, and though he was ready enough to ruin Cecil, he had no wish to be dragged down in his fall. "The Duke's party," writes De Spes, "and those who favour the Queen of Scotland, are incomparably the greater number. . . . I believe there will be some great event soon, as the people are much dissatisfied and distressed by want of trade, and these gentlemen of Nonsuch have some new imaginations in their heads."

A few days after this was written, Norfolk received the ominous warning from the Queen at Titchfield, to "beware on what pillow he rested his head." The Duke was a poor, weak creature, and instead of accompanying the Queen to Windsor, he fled into Norfolk, and from there wrote an apology to the Queen. Elizabeth's answer was a peremptory summons for him to come to court, ill or well. He delayed, and the Queen, in a rage, sent and arrested him, confining him first at Burnham, near Windsor, and shortly afterwards in the Tower. How wise and moderate Cecil was under the circumstances, may be seen in his own letters. He knew better than any one that the conspiracy was primarily directed against him, as one of the conditions imposed upon Mary was stated to be that nothing should be done against Elizabeth;[1] yet this is how he

[1] Mary consented to the condition; and the whole arrangement was, according to Norfolk and the Bishop of Ross, acquiesced in by Leicester and

wrote to the Queen just before Norfolk was sent to the Tower[1] (9th October): "If the Duke shall be charged with the crime of treason, and shall not thereof be convicted, he shall not only save his credit, but increase it. And surely, without the facts may appear manifest within the compass of treason (which I cannot see how they can), he shall be acquitted of that charge; and better it were in the beginning to foresee the matter, than attempt it with discredit, and not without suspicion of evil will and malice. Wherefore I am bold to wish that your Majesty would show your intention only to inquire of the facts and circumstances, and not by any speech to note the same as treason. And if your Majesty would yourself consider the words of the statute evidencing treasons, I think you would so consider it."

In a letter written by Cecil to Norris a few days before this,[2] he says that he had answered to the Queen, who was very angry with Norfolk, for the latter's return; and he gives an account of the Duke's plight and reported willingness to obey the Queen's summons:

the majority of the Council. How far sincere Mary was in accepting the condition, may be seen by her message to De Spes. "She says if she were at liberty, or could get such help as would enable her to bring her country to submission, she would deliver herself and her son entirely into your Majesty's hands, but now she will be obliged to sail with the wind" (De Spes to Philip, 27th August). This, no doubt, referred to her having consented to the marriage with Norfolk, and to the proposals submitted by the English Government to Murray and the Parliament of Perth for Mary's return to Scotland. Murray was opposed to his sister's return in any form, and neither of the Queen's propositions, nor Mary's petition for a divorce from Bothwell, was granted. That Cecil was at this time (the spring and summer of 1569) desirous of getting rid of Mary from England, without allowing her to go to France, where the Catholics had just beaten the Huguenots, is certain, and also that he did not wish her to be ill used in Scotland. See his minute sent to Murray by Henry Carey, demanding to know what hostages would be given for her safety if she was returned. (Hatfield Papers, Haynes; also Strype's Annals, and Rapin.)

[1] Harl. MSS., 6353.

[2] *Scrinia Ceciliana*, 3rd October.

"whereof I am glad; first, for the respect of the State, and next for the Duke himself, whom of all subjects I honoured and loved above the rest, and surely found in him always matter so deserving. Whilst this matter hath been passing, you must not think but that the Queen of Scots was nearer looked to than before; and though evil willers of our State would gladly have seen some troublesome issue of this matter, yet, God be thanked, I trust they shall be deceived. The Queen hath willed Lord Arundel and Lord Pembroke to keep their lodgings here, for that they were privy to this marriage intended, and did not reveal it to her Majesty; but I think none of them did so with any evil meaning.[1] Of Lord Pembroke's intent herein, I can witness that he meant nothing but well to the Queen's Majesty. Lord Lumley is also restrained, and the Queen hath also been grievously offended with Lord Leicester, but considering that he hath revealed all that he sayeth he knoweth of himself, her Majesty spareth her displeasure more towards him. Some disquiets must arise, but I trust not hurtful, for that her Majesty sayeth she will know the truth, so as every one shall see his own fault, and so stay." But for all Cecil's diplomatic pleading, Norfolk went to the Tower, where, with feigned submission and lying protestations, he continued to plot with Mary Stuart and the enemies of England. The Catholics and Nor-

[1] In a postscript to a letter from the Earl of Huntingdon to Cecil from Coventry, where he was in joint charge of Mary Stuart, 9th December 1569, he mentions "the speech that passeth amongst many, how earnest a dealer you were for this marriage for which the Duke and others do suffer her Majesty's displeasure: yea, it is reported from the mouth of some of the sufferers that, in persuasion, you (Cecil) yielded such reasons for it as he (the Duke), by them, was most moved to consent." Cecil can hardly have been so forward in the matter as is here suggested, or it surely would have been mentioned in the rigorous examinations of those implicated. (Hatfield Papers, part i.)

folk's friends, of course, threw the whole blame upon Cecil.[1]

Shortly before Norfolk's arrest, De Spes, who was still in close communication with the northern Lords and the Duke's friends, wrote to the King, anticipating a favourable result of the movement; "although, on the other hand, I observe that Cecil and his fellow-Protestants on the Council are still very much deluding themselves. Even now, with the peril before them, they will not come to reason, so firmly persuaded are they that their religion will prevail." As soon as Arundel and his friends were placed under arrest, De Spes says that "every one cast the blame on Secretary Cecil, who conducts these affairs with great astuteness." All would be lost, he said, by the Duke's cowardice, and the Queen of Scots had sent to urge him to behave valiantly. But valour was no part of wretched Norfolk's nature. A few days before the Duke was lodged in the Tower, an envoy of the northern Earls, headed by Northumberland, came to De Spes, promising to raise and capture the north country, release Mary, restore the Catholic religion, and return unconditionally all the Spanish property seized. They only asked in return that a few Spanish harquebussiers should be sent; and they dropped Norfolk out of their programme, looking to the Spaniards to provide a fit husband for Mary. "Whilst Cecil governs here, no good course can be expected, and the Duke of Norfolk

[1] De Spes went so far as to say that it was Cecil who was urging that Norfolk should be sent to the Tower—the very reverse, as we now know, being the case. Cecil afterwards thought it worth while to defend himself against this charge in a note of his still existing in the Cotton MSS. It runs: "Whoso sayeth that I have in any wise directly or indirectly hindered or altered her Majesty's disposition in the delivery of the Duke of Norfolk out of the Tower, I do affirm the same is untrue, and he that sayeth so doth speak an untruth. If any man will affirm the same to be true against this, my asseriton, the same doth therein maintain an untruth and a lye. W. Cecil, xii. Julii, 1570."

says that he wished to get him out of the government and change the guard of the Queen of Scotland before taking up arms. It is thought they will not dare to take the Duke to the Tower, though in this they may be deceived, because they who now rule are Protestants, and most of them creatures of Cecil." The Secretary's attitude in this matter has been treated somewhat at length, because it happens that material exists which shows conclusively how bitter and unjust were his enemies towards him, and how impossible it is to accept, without full examination, statements to his detriment, made even by men who were in daily communication with him.

In the middle of October the Catholic ferment in the north reached its height. The Queen had summoned Northumberland and Westmoreland, and they refused to obey. Without waiting for the Spanish aid for which they had stipulated, they entered Durham with 5000 foot and 1000 horse, and proclaimed the restoration of the Catholic faith. Cecil himself, giving an account of the rising to Norris,[1] says, "They have in their company priests of their faction, who, to please the people thereabouts, give them masses, and some such trash as the spoils and wastes where they have been." Smashing communion-tables and devastating Protestant houses as they went, they advanced to Doncaster; but the Government had long foreseen the affair, and were ready to cope with it. Mary was hurried off, strongly guarded, to Coventry, out of the reach of the rebels. Lord Darcy repulsed one band; the Earl of Sussex, president of the north, held York against the main body; the wardens of the marches were well prepared and provided by Cecil's foresight, and the country people in the great towns of the north were intimidated into quietude. On the

[1] 2nd November (*Scrinia Cecil.iana*).

24th December, Cecil could write: "Thank God, our northern rebellion is fallen flat to the ground and scattered away.[1] The Earls are fled into Northumberland, seeking all ways to escape, but they are roundly pursued, by Sir John Forster and Sir Henry Percy in one company, and Lord Sussex in another. The 16th December they broke up their sorry army, the 18th entered Northumberland, the 19th into the mountains; they scattered all their footmen, willing them to shift for themselves; and of a thousand horsemen there are left but five hundred. By this time they must be fewer, and, I trust, either taken or fled into Scotland, where the Earl of Murray is in good readiness to chase them to their ruin."[2]

So ended, ignominiously, the only important armed revolt against Elizabeth in England, but the first of a long series of plots against the peace and independence of the nation, by which Mary Stuart from her captivity, English Catholics who prized their faith more than their country, and Spain and the Guises, for their own national or dynastic ends, sought to bend the neck of England once again to the yoke which the statecraft of Elizabeth and her great minister had enabled her to shake off.

[1] Full details of the operations against the rebels will be found in the Sadler Papers; Sir Ralph Sadler being the Warden of the East and Middle Marches, and Paymaster-general of the army.

[2] The Earl of Westmoreland succeeded in escaping to Flanders, and thence to Spain. He remained a pensioner of Philip's for years afterwards, plotting against England, and beseeching payment of the grudging dole which the Spanish King had assigned to him. Northumberland was captured by Murray and imprisoned in Lochleven; and at the time of the Regent's assassination, Elizabeth's special envoys from the Border were negotiating for Northumberland's surrender. He was delivered to the English Government in 1572 by the Regent Morton, and beheaded at York.

CHAPTER X

1570–1572

AT no time since her accession had Elizabeth and her government been in so much danger as immediately after the suppression of the rebellion of the north. Cecil had known that the Catholic English and Scottish nobles and Mary were in constant communication with Spain and the Pope, but even he was not aware how widespread was the conspiracy.[1] Orange in the Netherlands, and Coligny in France, had for a time been crushed; Condé had been killed in battle; and everywhere the Catholic cause was triumphant. This was the eventuality which alone England had to fear; and although Spanish aid to the English Catholics was neither so active nor so abundant as has usually been assumed,

[1] On the pretext of negotiating once more for the return of the Spanish property seized, Alba sent to England, in October, the famous Italian general, Ciapino Vitello, and in his letters to Sadler, Cecil expresses great anxiety as to the probability of an attack being made by Alba on Hartlepool at the time. English writers have always assumed that Ciapino came to England in order to take command of a force to be sent by Alba to England, but there is no trace of such a project in Alba's or Guzman's letters. Ciapino was forced, however, to leave his large retinue at Dover, and considerable delay took place before even he was received. Alba states to Philip that Cecil and Leicester had been, or were to be, bribed by the bankers Spinola and Fiesco, to allow Ciapino to come to England (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth), but Leicester sent word to Ciapino, as soon as the rising in the north was known, that his stay in England was considered very suspicious. He was then hurried away as soon as possible. There was really, however, not the slightest ground at the time to fear an armed invasion by Alba in favour of Mary. He wrote to Philip, 11th December, that he expected the rising "would all end in smoke," and he would not move a step without Philip's precise instructions.

unquestionably the hopes and promises held out both by Philip and the Pope had raised the spirits of the Catholics in England and Scotland higher than they had been for many years. Spanish money and support under papal auspices kept Ireland in a state of discord, as we have seen; Mary appealed to King Philip as a vassal to her suzerain; the Guisan agents were busy plotting with the Hamiltons and Murray's enemies on the Border, and the whole north of England was riddled with religious discontent. Cecil wrote at the beginning of 1570 to Norris: "We have discovered some tokens, and we hear of some words uttered by the Earl of Northumberland, that maketh us think this rebellion had more branches, both of our own and strangers, than did appear, and I trust the same will be found out, though perchance when all are known in secret manner, all may not be notified."

The truth of Cecil's forebodings came soon afterwards. On the 22nd February 1570, Murray was shot by a Hamilton in the streets of Linlithgow, and in the anarchy which followed, the friends of Mary Stuart on the Scottish Border invaded England. Maitland of Lethington and others who had hitherto stood firmly by Murray, now turned to the side of the Hamiltons and the French party; whilst a special French Guisan envoy boldly demanded of Elizabeth, in the name of the King of France, Mary Stuart's release, permission for himself to pass into Scotland, and a pledge from the English Queen that in future she would refrain from supporting the Huguenots. Papal emissaries whispered at first that the Pope had excommunicated "the flagitious pretended Queen of England"; and then one Catholic, bolder than the rest (Felton), dared publicly to post the bull on the Bishop of London's door. The Bishop of Ross was tireless in spreading the view of Mary's innocence and

unmerited sufferings,[1] and many Englishmen who were opposed to her in everything were scandalised at her continued captivity. So strong a Protestant as Sir Henry Norris, the English Ambassador in Paris—for ever the butt of French remonstrance against Mary's imprisonment—advised Cecil to have her released. But Sir William knew better the risk of such a step now, and replied, "Surely few here amongst us conceive it feasible with surety," and he was right. Stories, too, came from Flanders of plans to assassinate Elizabeth; but she was never so strong or wise as when the circumstances were difficult and dangerous. "I know not," writes Cecil, "by what means, but her Majesty is not much troubled with the opinion of danger; nevertheless I and others cannot be but greatly fearful for her, and do, and will do, all that in us may lie to understand by God's assistance the attempts."

It was not long before Cecil had once more triumphed over his enemies on the Council and in England: the danger that then threatened was from without. Again, the policy of disabling the foreign Catholics by aiding the Protestants was resorted to. Killigrew was kept busy in Germany arranging with Hans Casimir and other mercenary leaders, to raise large forces for the purpose of entering France and enabling the Huguenots to avenge their disasters.[2] Cardinal Chatillon was still a

[1] See *inter alia* the Bishop of Ross's letter to Philip, 4th November 1569 (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth). His mistress, he says, had ordered him to remonstrate with Elizabeth against her imprisonment at Tutbury, and to demand either her restoration to her throne, or that she should be allowed to go over to France or Spanish Flanders. He can get no answer from Elizabeth, he says, and therefore in Mary's name fervently begs for Philip's aid.

[2] Very large sums were granted by Elizabeth for this purpose. To Count Mansfield alone she promised 100,000 crowns payable in three months, and a like sum in two years. In February the Prince of Orange sent an envoy to England to beg for similar aid, which was to be largely supplemented by the Flemings in England. The envoy was secretly lodged in Cecil House.

welcome guest at the English court. The privateers in the Channel were stronger and bolder than ever, and had practically swept Spanish shipping from the narrow seas. The Flemings were encouraged with promises of help and support when Orange had once more organised a force to cope with Alba. Sussex and Hunsdon in the meanwhile did not let the grass grow under their feet, but harried both sides of the Border, stamping out the last embers of rebellion, and striking terror into the Catholic fugitives, whilst Morton and the Protestant party were consolidating their position, momentarily shaken by the murder of Murray.[1] De Spes was ceaselessly clamouring to the King and Alba for armed intervention in England before it was too late. Mary might be captured by a *coup de main*, as she herself suggested, and carried to Spain; a few troops sent to Scotland now, said the Bishop of Ross, might overturn the new Regency; a small force in Ireland would easily expel the heretics; "and the whole nation will rise as soon as they see your Majesty's standard floating over ships on their coast."

But Alba distrusted both French and English, Protestants and Catholics alike. He knew that the conflagration in the Netherlands was still all aglow beneath the surface, and he dared not plunge into war with England. His slow master pondered and plotted, beset with cares and poverty, and unable to wreak his vengeance upon England until he had the certainty of Mary Stuart's exclusive devotion to his interests. But the extent and complexity

[1] There is an interesting memorandum of this period in Cecil's hand (Hatfield Papers, part i., Nos. 1452 and 1455), entitled, "Extract of ye booke of ye state of ye realme," in which the various dangers set forth in this page and the remedies therefor are described. The dangers are—the conspiracy of the Pope and the Kings of France and Spain against England; that of Mary Queen of Scots; the decay of civil obedience and of martial power in the country; the interruption of trade with Flanders, and the shortcomings in England's treaties with foreign princes.

of Philip's difficulties were only known to himself, and the danger appeared to Cecil even greater than it was.

The plague had raged in London for the whole of the summer of 1569, and a recrudescence of it in the following June gave Cecil a good opportunity for advocating Norfolk's partial enlargement. The Duke made a most solemn renunciation of his proposed marriage with Mary, and craved Elizabeth's forgiveness; and at length in August was allowed to retire to his own house. That he owed his liberation to Cecil is clear from his letters. At the beginning of July, apparently, some person—probably Leicester—had told the Duke that Cecil was against him, and the Secretary showed him how false this was, and proposed to take action against his slanderers. The Duke in reply thanked him for his friendly dealing and his frank explanation, "which have sufficiently purged him (Cecil) and laid the fault on those who deserved it." But he begged him to refrain from further action, as it might cause mischief.[1] When Norfolk at length was "rid of yonder pestylent infectyous hows" (the Tower), he unhesitatingly attributed his release to Cecil. How busy the slanderers of the Secretary were, and how deeply he felt the wounds they dealt him, may be seen in another statement in his own hand of the same period[2] (July 1570), which contains an indignant denial of the reports that had been spread with regard to his alleged dishonest dealing with the property of his ward the Earl of Oxford.

During the whole of Norfolk's stay in the Tower and afterwards, the love-letters between him and Mary continued, the Queen signing her letters "your own faithful to death," and using many similar terms of endearment;[3]

[1] Hatfield Papers, part i. [2] *Ibid.*

[3] See her letters in Labanoff, iii., and also Banister's Confessions (Hatfield).

and Cecil could hardly have been entirely ignorant of the Duke's bad faith. But for political reasons it was considered necessary, not only to conciliate him, but Mary and the Spaniards as well. Concurrently, therefore, with the negotiations for Norfolk's release, a show of willingness was made to come to terms with Mary. Her presence in England was an embarrassment and a danger, and now that Murray was dead, the principal personal obstacle to her return had disappeared. If she could be so tied down as to be used as a means for pacifying Scotland, whilst depending for the future entirely upon England, her return to her country would relieve Elizabeth of a difficulty. The first basis of negotiation was the surrender of the English rebel Lords in exchange for her, and the delivery to England of four or six of the principal Scottish nobles and the young Prince as hostages. But these terms were by no means acceptable to Mary's agents or to herself. She feared that the Scots would kill her, and the English her son, and so secure the joint kingdoms to a nominee of Elizabeth or Cecil.

The main reason for Elizabeth's change of attitude must be sought in the panic which seized upon England in the early summer of 1570. A powerful Spanish fleet was in the Channel, ostensibly to convey Philip's fourth wife, Anne of Austria, from Flanders to Spain; but rumours came that the dreaded Duke of Alba was ready now for the invasion of England. The Guises in Normandy, too, were said to have an army of harquebussiers waiting to embark for Scotland; the Irish rebels were being helped both by Philip and the Guises. The Pope's bull absolving Englishmen from their oaths of allegiance was the talk everywhere, and English merchants in despair cried that at last they and their country were to pay for the depredations of the pirates. The French were demanding haughtily that the English troops should

evacuate the Border Scottish fortresses held by them, and the Protestants in France and Flanders were not yet prepared to furnish the diversion upon which the English usually depended for their own safety.

The position was very grave in appearance, though not so great in reality, and it alarmed Elizabeth out of her equanimity. De Guaras says that she shut herself up for three days, and railed against Cecil for bringing her to such a pass; and the same observer reports that when Cecil one day in the middle of July left the Queen and retired to his own apartment, he cried to his wife in deep distress, "O wife! if God do not help us we shall be lost and undone. Get together all the jewels and money you can, that you may follow me when the time comes; for surely trouble is in store for us."[1] This may or may not be true in detail, and also Guaras' assertion that Cecil had sent large private funds to Germany, whither he would retire in case of trouble; but it is certain that panic reigned supreme for a few weeks in the summer, accentuated, doubtless, by the plague which was devastating the country. But fright did not paralyse the minister for long, if at all. Twenty-five ships were hastily armed, two fresh armies were raised of five thousand men each, ostensibly for Scotland. Mary was prompted to send Livingston to Scotland to negotiate an arrangement with the Regent Lennox, and Cecil himself, with Sir Walter Mildmay, was induced to go and confer with Mary at Chatsworth; but, says De Spes, "all these things are simply tricks of Cecil's, who thinks thereby to cheat every one, in which to a certain extent he succeeds." The Secretary had by this time discovered that in any case neither Philip nor Alba would raise a finger to avenge a slight upon De Spes, for he had imprisoned him and distressed him in a

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

thousand ways already without retaliation. At the same time, a blow at such a notorious conspirator as he was could not fail to produce a great effect upon the English Catholics who plotted with him and looked to Spain alone for support. Cecil therefore sent Fitzwilliams to Flanders about the seizures, and instructed him to complain to Alba of De Spes' communications with the rebels. "His object," wrote the Ambassador, "is to expel me, now that they think I understand the affairs of this country; and Cecil thinks that I, with others, might make such representations to the Queen as would diminish his great authority. . . . Cecil is a crafty fox, a mortal enemy of the Catholics and to our King, and it is necessary to watch his designs very closely, because he proceeds with the greatest caution and dissimulation. There is nothing in his power he does not attempt to injure us. The Queen's own opinion is of little importance, and that of Leicester less; so that Cecil unrestrainedly and arrogantly governs all. . . . Your worship may be certain that if Cecil is allowed to have his way he will disturb the Netherlands."[1] De Spes' information was correct on the latter point, as well it might be, for in addition to Cecil's own secretary, Allington, he had in his pay Sir James Crofts, a member of the Council, and the Secretary of the Council, Bernard Hampton, who between them brought him news of everything that passed in the Council or in Cecil House.

The Secretary's efforts to get rid of so troublesome a guest as De Spes, and to offer an object-lesson to the English Catholics at the same time, were persistent, and in the end successful. De Spes was refused the treatment of an ambassador, threatened with the Tower, flouted, slighted, and insulted at every turn; but he could only futilely storm and fret, for neither his King nor

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

Alba was pleased with the difficult position which his violence had created for them in England. It was all the fault of Cecil personally, insisted De Spes. He wished to afflict the Catholic cause without witnesses, and would stick at nothing, even poison, to get rid of the Spaniard.

Cecil would have liked to avoid his mission to Mary Stuart, for he was almost crippled with constant gout, and he was fully aware of the hollowness of the negotiations in hand. The interviews with Mary could hardly have been agreeable, although they were carried out with great formality and politeness on both sides. Cecil charged her with a knowledge of the northern rebellion, which she only partly denied, saying, however, that she did not encourage it. Mary seems to have been alternately passionate and tearful; but her bad adviser, the Bishop of Ross, was by her side, and though she argued her case shrewdly, she could not refrain from unwisely and unnecessarily wounding Elizabeth at the outset.[1] In the second article of the proposed treaty, where Elizabeth's issue were to be preferred in the succession, Mary altered the words to "lawful issue," to which Elizabeth, although acceding to it, replied that Mary "measured other folk's disposition by her own actions." After some acrimony on the subject of other alterations on behalf of Mary, an arrangement was arrived at, which, however, was afterwards vetoed by the Scottish Government,[2] at the instance of Morton, who was the Commissioner in London.

Whilst the negotiations with Mary had been progressing, peace had been signed between the Huguenots

[1] The whole of the documents are at Hatfield; most of them *in extenso* in Haynes.

[2] See Morton to Cecil, 9th February 1571 (Hatfield Papers, part i., 1541); and Elizabeth to Shrewsbury, 24th March (*ibid.*, 1546).

and Charles IX. at St. Germains (August 1570), and the fears of Elizabeth and Cecil were consequently aggravated at the plans which were known to be promoted by Cardinal Lorraine for the marriage of the Duke of Anjou, next brother to the French King, with the Queen of Scots. Now that the Montmorencis and the "politicians" had reconciled parties in France, the danger of such a match became serious both to England and the sincere Huguenots. Anjou posed as the figurehead of the extreme Catholic party, but was known to be vaguely ambitious and unstable. Cardinal Chatillon therefore thought it would be a good move to disarm him by yoking him under Huguenot auspices to Elizabeth. The first approach was made by the Vidame de Chartres to Cecil, who privately discussed it with the Queen. They must have regarded it with favour, for it was exactly the instrument they needed for splitting the league, and arousing jealousy between France and Spain. The Emperor had just given a severe rebuff to attempts to revive the Archduke's match with Elizabeth, but the negotiation for making a French Catholic prince King-consort of England under Huguenot control was a master-stroke which sufficed to overturn all international combinations, set France and Spain by the ears, turned the Guises, as relatives of Mary Stuart, against their principal supporter in France, and reduced the Queen of Scots herself to quite a secondary element in the problem. The idea was just as welcome to Catharine de Medici, who hated Mary Stuart as much as she dreaded the Guises. Both she and the young King would have been glad to be quit of the ambitious Anjou, who always threw in his weight on the Catholic side, and made it more difficult for the Queen-mother to hold the balance. So, very soon Guido Cavalcanti was speeding backwards and forwards between England and France, secretly preparing

the way for the more formal negotiations between the official Ambassadors.

So far as the Queen of England was concerned, the negotiation was purely political and insincere, for the reasons just stated, but the comedy was well played by all parties. Leicester of course was favourable, for it meant bribes to him, and there was no danger. La Mothe Fénélon, the Ambassador, gently broached the matter to the Queen at Hampton Court in January 1571. As usual she was coy and coquettish. She was too old for Anjou, she objected, but still she said the princes of the House of France had the reputation of being good husbands.[1] Cardinal Chatillon shortly afterwards was blunter than the Ambassador. Would the Queen marry Anjou if he proposed? he asked, to which Elizabeth replied, that on certain conditions she would; and the next day she submitted the subject to her Council, who, as in duty bound, threw the whole of the responsibility on to the Queen.

Walsingham had just replaced Norris as Ambassador to France. He was a friend of Leicester, a strict Protestant, who had been indoctrinated in the political methods of Cecil, with whom and with Leicester he kept up a close confidential correspondence.[2] One of his first letters to Leicester gives a personal description of the young Prince, in which a desire to tell the truth struggles with his duty not to say anything which may hamper the negotiation. The Guises and the Spanish party in Paris exhorted Anjou to avoid being drawn into the net, and the Duke himself at one time openly used insulting expressions towards Elizabeth; but such was the position in England that it was absolutely

[1] *Correspondance de la Mothe Fénélon.*

[2] Walsingham Papers. Most of the letters *in extenso* in "The Compleat Ambassador."

necessary that an appearance of reality should be given to the affair. Prudent Cecil, as usual, avoided pledging himself personally more than necessary, and wrote from Greenwich to Walsingham on the 3rd March, that he had wished the Queen herself to write her instructions, but as she had declined to do so, he merely repeated her words in a postscript—namely, that if he (Walsingham) were approached on the matter of the marriage, he might say that before he left England he had heard "that the Queen, upon consideration of the benefit of her realm, and to content her subjects, had resolved to marry if she should find a fit husband, who must be of princely rank." To this Cecil himself adds as his private opinion, to be told to no one, "I am not able to discern what is best, but surely I see no continuance of her quietness without a marriage."[1] Matters were indeed critical at this juncture, and Cecil, Leicester, and even Walsingham, repeatedly, and apparently with sincerity, stated their opinion that Elizabeth would be forced to wed Anjou, or he would marry Mary Stuart, as it was necessary for Catharine de Medici and the Huguenots to get rid of this fanatical figurehead of the extreme Catholic party.[2]

In his letter to Walsingham of 1st March, Cecil signs

[1] There are in the Foreign State Papers of the year several of Cecil's balancing considerations of the advantages and disadvantages of the match. From them it is clear that the Secretary himself was uncertain of the Queen's intentions. In one important letter to her (31st August), Cecil suggests a way by which she may extricate herself, if she pleases, from the agreement she had made on the matter with Catharine's special envoy, De Foix, at Knebworth. But he warns her very seriously of the dangerous position in which she stands unless she does marry. "It will," he says, "also be necessary to seek by your Majesty's best council the means to preserve yourself, as in the most dangerous and desperate sicknesses, the help of the best physicians; and surely how your Majesty shall obtain remedies for your perils, I think, is only in the knowledge of Almighty God."

[2] Norris to the Queen (Foreign State Papers), 31st August 1570; also Warcop's communications from Walsingham to Cecil, 16th July 1571, &c.

his name thus, "By your assured (as I was wont) William Cecil;" and then underneath, "And as I am now ordered to write, William Burleigh."[1] That the title was not of his own seeking is almost certain. The Spanish Ambassador, De Spes, says that the Queen ennobled him in order that he might be more useful in Parliament and in the matter of the Queen of Scots; and the new Lord himself, in a letter to Nicholas White, speaks thus slightingly of his new honour: "My style is Lord of Burghley if you mean to know it for your writing, and if you list to write truly, the poorest Lord in England. Yours, not changed in friendship, though in name, William Burghley." To Walsingham again he wrote on the 25th March, "My style of my poor degree is Lord of Burghley;" and on the 14th April in a letter to the same correspondent he signs, "William Cecill—I forgot my new word, William Burleigh."

At the time of his elevation the new Lord was suffering from one of his constantly recurring fits of gout, and his letters are mostly written, with pain and difficulty, which he frequently mentions, "from my bed in my house at Westminster." And yet, withal, the amount of work he got through at the time was nothing short of marvellous. Every matter, great and small, seemed to be dealt with by him. He was a Member of Parliament for the two counties of Lincoln and Northampton;[2] as Chancellor of the University of Cambridge he

[1] Walsingham Papers.

[2] His eldest son Thomas, afterwards Lord Exeter, also sat in this Parliament as representative of the borough of Stamford. He had ended the sowing of his wild oats, to which reference has been made, by running away with a nun from a French convent; and was now married to Dorothy Nevil, a daughter of the last Lord Latimer, whose sister had married Sir Henry Percy, brother of the rebel Earl of Northumberland. Lord Burghley, in the little Perpetual Calendar at Hatfield, duly records the birth of all of Thomas's children, three of whom had been born by this time.

was deeply interested in the interminable disputes there with regard to ritual, vestments, and scholastic questions; as President of the Court of Wards he attended personally to an immense number of estates and private interests;[1] and acquaintances, high and low, from Greys, Howards, Clintons, and Dudleys, down to poor students or alien refugees, still by common accord addressed their petitions for aid and advice to him. To judge by their grateful acknowledgments, they seem rarely to have appealed to him in vain, and it is evident by the hundreds of such letters at Hatfield, that even when petitions could not be granted, they were assured of impartial and just consideration from Lord Burghley. His own great establishments, too, at Burghley, Theobalds, and London, must have claimed much of his attention, for all accounts passed under his own eyes, and in such small matters as the rotation of crops, the sale of produce, the breeding of stock, and the replenishment of gardens, nothing was done without consultation with the master. His hospitality was very great; for we are told by his domestic biographer that "he kept open house everywhere, and his steward kept a standing table for gentlemen, besides two other long tables, often twice set out, one for the clerk of the kitchen, and the other for yeomen." He personally can have had but little enjoyment from his splendid houses and stately living. He must have been almost constantly at court, or hard

[1] The young Earl of Rutland, one of his wards, especially at this time seems to have occupied much of his attention. He was sent with Lord Buckhurst's embassy to France to congratulate Charles IX. on his marriage with Elizabeth of Austria, and at every stage of the journey a correspondence was kept up between them, the Secretary being solicitous for the lad's welfare and good treatment even to the smallest detail. In the State Papers, Domestic, of 20th January 1571, there is a curious document in Cecil's handwriting, headed "Directions for a Traveller," laying down for Lord Rutland's guidance strict rules for his conduct whilst abroad.

at work at his house in Cannon Row, Westminster, handy for Whitehall, rather than at his new palace in the Strand, where his wife and family lodged. He seems to have had no hobby but books and gardens, and to have taken no exercise except on his rare visits to Theobalds or Burghley, when he would jog round his garden paths on an ambling mule.

This was the man, vigilant, prudent, moderate, cautious and untiring in his industry, who in the spring and summer of 1571 by his consummate statecraft once more brought England out of the coil of perils which surrounded her on all sides. His counter-move to Spanish support to the rebels in England and Ireland, and to Guisan plots in Scotland, was to supply arms, munitions, and money to the Protestants of Rochelle and the Dutch privateers, and to fit out a strong English fleet. The pacification of France and the crushing of reform in Flanders were answered by remittances of money to Germany to raise mercenaries for Orange, and the welcoming of Louis of Nassau and Cardinal Chatillon in England; whilst the marriage of Charles IX. to an Austrian Princess, and the closer relations between France and the Catholic league, were counteracted by the marriage negotiations between Elizabeth and Anjou, and the treaty with Mary Stuart for her restoration.

But as the effect of Cecil's diplomacy gradually became apparent, the more reckless of his opponents resorted to desperate devices to frustrate him. Already, by February 1571, Mary Stuart had convinced herself that the treaty for her liberation was fallacious, and she wrote an important letter to the Bishop of Ross, from which great events sprang.[1] She refers to plans for her escape, and announces her decision to go to Spain,

[1] Mary to the Bishop, 8th February 1571 (Cotton MSS., Caligula, c. xi.).

throwing herself in future entirely upon Philip as her protector; and she urges that Ridolfi should be sent to Spain and Rome to explain her situation and resolve, and to beg for help. Norfolk was to be asked to pledge himself finally to become a Catholic; doubt as to his religion, she says, having been the principal reason for Philip's lukewarmness. The Bishop sent a copy of the letter to Norfolk, who was still nominally under arrest. The Duke gave his consent, and Ridolfi started from England at the end of March. It has been frequently denied that Norfolk connived at this proposal for the invasion of England by a foreign power; but, in addition to the depositions of Ross and Barker,[1] the following letter from De Spes introducing Ridolfi to Philip appears to settle the question against the Duke:[2] "The Queen of Scots, and the Duke of Norfolk on behalf of many other lords and gentlemen who are attached to your Majesty's interests, and the promotion of the Catholic religion, are sending Rodolfo Ridolfi, a Florentine gentleman, to offer their services to your Majesty, and to represent to you that the time is now ripe to take a step of great benefit to Christianity, as in detail Ridolfi will set forth to your Majesty. The letter of credence from the Duke of Norfolk is written in the cipher that I have sent to Zayas, for fear it should be taken. London, 25th March, 1571." The exact proposal to be made verbally by Ridolfi is not stated, but De Spes refers to it in his next letter as "the real remedy" for Lord Burghley's activity. It is probable that not only the support of Mary and Norfolk was intended, but also the assassination of Elizabeth and her minister.[3] Cecil

[1] Hatfield Papers and State Trials.

[2] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

[3] That this possibility was ever present to the minds of Elizabeth's advisers, is seen by the constant warnings on the subject by Cecil's agents in Flanders,

had been put upon the alert by the kidnapping in Flanders and bringing to England of the notorious Dr. Storey, who, under torture in the Tower, had divulged the dealings of the northern Lords with Alba through Ridolfi and the Bishop of Ross. This caused Cecil to keep a watch upon the doings of both the agents; and Lord Cobham, in Dover, was instructed to intercept any cipher letters which might be brought by a Flemish secretary of the Bishop of Ross, one Charles Bailly, who was with Ridolfi in Flanders. The man was stopped and his papers captured, with some copies of the Bishop of Ross's book in favour of Mary's claims. The Cobhams were never to be trusted; and Thomas Cobham surreptitiously obtained the cipher keys, and had them conveyed to De Spes, substituting for them a dummy packet, which was sent to Cecil. But Bailly himself, who had written the papers at Ridolfi's dictation, was promptly put on the rack in the Tower, and confessed that the letters were written to two persons, designated by numbers, under cover to the Bishop, and conveyed the Duke of Alba's approval of the plan for invading England, and his readiness, if authorised by his King, to co-operate with the persons indicated.

Letters sent by the Bishop to Bailly after his arrest, urging him to firmness, threatening the traitor who had betrayed him, and in a hundred ways proving his own complicity, were all intercepted and read. The tortured wretch swore to the Bishop that he would tell nothing, even if they tore him into a hundred pieces; begged that his trunk containing drafts of letters from Mary to Car-

and by Walsingham. In one of Cecil's statements as to the advantages and disadvantages of the Queen's marriage with Anjou (Foreign State Papers, 14th January 1571), he enters on the contra side the possibility that, in the case of there being no issue, the King-consort might shorten the Queen's life and marry Mary Stuart. The confessions of the men who were to murder Burghley in connection with the Ridolfi plot are at Hatfield.

dinal Lorraine and Hamilton might be rescued from his lodging. But Burghley forestalled them all. The whole of the letters were taken, and every day, in the Tower, fresh rackings, and threats to cut off his ears or his head, were used by Burghley to the frightened lad, to force him to give a key of the cipher. One morning at five o'clock he was carried by the Lieutenant of the Tower to Lord Burghley, and was told that, unless he immediately confessed all, he would be racked till the truth was torn from him. The lad, half distraught, day by day unfolded as much as he knew, notwithstanding the Bishop's frantic assurances that Burghley would not dare to harm him much, as he was a foreigner and a servant of the Queen of Scots.[1] And so, piece by piece, the whole conspiracy was unravelled so far as regarded the main object, and the complicity of Alba, the Spaniards and the Bishop of Ross proved beyond doubt; but still the persons indicated by the cipher numbers "30" and "40" could only be surmised, for Bailly himself did not know them. Gradually the names of Mary Stuart and Norfolk crept into the depositions of those examined, but without sufficient definiteness yet for open proceedings against them to be commenced.

Whilst Lord Burghley, with inexhaustible patience, was tracking the plot to its source, the most elaborate pretence of agreement with the French on the subject of the Anjou match was kept up both in Paris and London; though more sincere on the part of the former than the

[1] Details of all the examinations and the letters are at Hatfield. Burghley alleged that Bailly was a Scotchman. His claimed to be considered a servant of the Queen of Scots was merely a technical one, although on his tomb in a church in a suburb of Brussels he is called a secretary of the Queen, which he certainly was not, and there is a bas-relief of her execution. This has led on several occasions to the incorrect assertion that Charles Bailly was present at the scene represented. He lived for many years in Flanders in the pay of Spain; and, at least on one occasion (1586), he took part in a Spanish attempt to foment a Catholic invasion and revolution in Scotland.

latter, for Catharine and Charles IX. were in mortal fear of the Guises, the League, and the heir-presumptive to the crown. Cavalcanti and officers of the King's household ran backwards and forwards to England with loving messages; and the Huguenots worked their best to bring the matter to a successful issue, or, in default of it, for a close alliance. Henry Cobham was sent to Madrid ostensibly to treat on the matter of the seizures, but really to learn, if possible, how far Philip was pledged to the plans against England; but the Spaniards were forewarned and ready for him, and he learned nothing.

Lord Burghley had, however, a better plan than this. Fitzwilliam, a relative of the English Duchess of Feria, had been sent to Spain by him for the purpose of negotiating for the release of the men and hostages who had been captured from Hawkins at San Juan de Ulloa. He professed in Spain to be strongly Catholic and in favour of Mary Stuart, and came back to England in 1571, with presents, pledges, and promises to the captive Queen and her friends. Hawkins lay with a strong auxiliary fleet at the mouth of the Channel, and it was agreed with Lord Burghley that Fitzwilliam and Hawkins should hoodwink the Spaniards, obtain a good haul for themselves, and at the same time trace the ramifications of the great international plot against England. De Spes jumped at the bait, with but a mere qualm of misgiving, when Fitzwilliam went and offered, on behalf of Hawkins, to desert with all his fleet to Spain, and take part, if necessary, in an attack upon England. When he wrote to the King he said, "My only fear is lest Burghley himself may have set the matter afoot to discover your Majesty's feelings, though I have seen nothing to make me think this."

But it was exactly the case, nevertheless, and the ruse succeeded beyond expectation. By the end of

August all Hawkins' men had been released in Spain and sent back to England, with ten dollars each in their pockets, and Hawkins himself was the better off by £40,000 of Spanish money. But more than this: Burghley had obtained through Fitzwilliam full knowledge of the aims of the Ridolfi conspiracy. It was clear now to demonstration that the Pope,[1] Philip, and the Catholic party in France were pledged to a vast crusade against England, for crushing Protestantism, destroying Elizabeth,[2] and raising Mary Stuart to the thrones of Great Britain. Burghley and the Queen had practically known it for months, as we have seen, and already the diplomatic measures they had taken to counteract it were producing their effects. But now that the evidence was sufficient, the blow against the conspirators could be struck openly. All unsuspecting still, De Spes was comforting himself with the reflection that the capture of Bailly was an unimportant incident; he urged Alba and the King to immediate action, fumed at the instructions he received to hold back Philip's letters to Mary and Norfolk until he had orders to deliver them, and sneered at the timid delay. "As all of Lord Burghley's jests have turned out well for him hitherto, he is ready to undertake anything, and has no fear of danger. They and the French together make great fun of our meekness." "It is a pity to lose time, for Lord Burghley is continuing to oppress the Catholics. If the opportunity is lost this year, I fear the false religion will prevail in this island in a way which will make it a harsh neighbour for the Netherlands."

[1] The Pope had sent by Beton, early in the year, as much as 140,000 crowns to Mary Stuart, which she received through Ridolfi. (Examination of Ross: Hatfield.)

[2] The conspiracy included also a design to assassinate Burghley himself. (See the confessions of Edmund Mather, the proposed murderer, and Kenelm Berney, January 1572. Hatfield State Papers, part ii.).

The opportunity, though he did not know it, had been lost already, for all the threads were now in Burghley's hands, and he was master of the situation. In August was intercepted the bag of money (£600) with a cipher letter[1] being sent secretly to Herries and Kirkaldy of Grange, Mary's friends in Scotland, by the Duke of Norfolk's secretary, and in a day or two the net swept into the Tower the Duke and all the underlings who had served as intermediaries. Burghley lost no time now. Almost every day, threats or the rack wrung some fresh admission from the instruments — secretaries, messengers, and the like. Norfolk at first, with extreme effrontery, denied everything;[2] but he was a weak man, and soon broke down. Even then De Spes did not see that all was lost. "The Catholics," he said, "are many, though their leaders be few, and Lord Burghley, with his terrible fury, has greatly harassed and dismayed them, for they are afraid even of speaking to each other. The whole affair depends upon getting weapons into their hands, and giving them some one to direct them."[3] It was too late. Mary Stuart's prison was made closer; her correspondence was intercepted and read; there was no more concealment necessary or possible. One Catholic noble after the other was isolated and imprisoned; Dr. Storey's dreadful fate was held up as a warning to traitors, and London and the country was flooded with broadsheets calculated to arouse English and Protestant sentiment to fever heat at the dastardly conspiracy which was laid bare.

On the 14th December a message reached De Spes summoning him to the Council at Whitehall. When he arrived there he found them awaiting him, with Lord

[1] The cipher letter from Hickford will be found in Harl. MSS., 290.
[2] Examination of the Duke (Hatfield; *in extenso* in Murdin).
[3] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

Burghley as spokesman. There was no mincing matters. The Ambassador was told that he had plotted with traitors against the Queen's life and the peace of the country, and he would be expelled, as Dr. Man had been from Spain with far less reason.[1] De Spes tried to brazen it out, but ineffectually. Burghley was on firm ground: no delay, he said, could be allowed, excepting the time absolutely necessary for the preparations for the voyage, which time was to be passed out of London.[2] Speechless, almost, with indignation, in pretended fear that Burghley would have him killed, De Spes was hustled out of the country he had sought to ruin, and a week afterwards (16th January 1572) the Duke of Norfolk was tried by his peers and found guilty of the capital crime of high treason.

De Spes left England with bitter resentment at the triumph of Burghley's diplomacy. "They will now," he says, "make themselves masters of the Channel, and with one blow, with their practices in Flanders, will plunge that country into a dreadful war. It is of no use now to speak of our lost opportunities. They have gone; but . . . steps may still be taken to make these people weep in their own country." When he arrived

[1] The English draft of Burghley's speech is in Foreign State Papers; De Spes' version in the Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

[2] It added to De Spes' rage that the time he was thus contemned Burghley was celebrating with great magnificence the marriage of his eldest daughter, Elizabeth, with the young Earl of Oxford, a connection which in after years brought him much trouble and anxiety. During the wedding festivities the open slight to Spain was made the most of. Cavalcanti was flattered and caressed, the Guises were denounced as "Hispaniolised traitors," and the Queen's connection with the Protestants of Germany and Flanders boasted of; whilst De Spes and his master were scornfully held up as an object-lesson of England's boldness and strength. De Spes, in his last letter to Alba before his embarkation, says that "Burghley has received certain threatening letters, and had informed the Queen that if I stay here during the trial of the prisoners the country will rise up in arms; and he, timid, contemptible fellow that he is, commits so many absurdities that people are quite astonished."

in Flanders he made a long report of his embassy, containing the following interesting appreciation of Burghley as he appeared to his greatest enemy: "The principal person in the Council is William Cecil, now Lord Burghley, a Knight of the Garter. He is a man of mean sort, but very astute, false, lying, and full of artifice. He is a great heretic, and such a clownish Englishman as to believe that all the Christian princes joined together are not able to injure the sovereign of his country, and he therefore treats their ministers with great arrogance. This man manages the bulk of the business, and by means of his vigilance and craftiness, together with his utter unscrupulousness of word and deed, thinks to outwit the ministers of other princes, which to some extent he has hitherto succeeded in doing."

Before De Spes was expelled, the efforts of Burghley, Walsingham, and De Foix had been successful in arranging the terms of a close political alliance between France and England. Elizabeth swore to Cavalcanti that she would never trust Spaniards again, and he might see how little she cared for the King of Spain by the way she had treated his Ambassador. She could, indeed, afford now to slight the most powerful monarch in the world; for one of the counter-strokes to the Spanish-Papal plot had been the concentration in the Channel of a great fleet of Flemish and Huguenot privateers under the Count de la Mark, and during the winter a plan had been perfected for the seizure by the "beggars" of Brille, the key to Zeeland. The imposition in Flanders of the tax which ruined Spain had been the last straw,[1] and the whole country was ripe for revolt. For some time an arrangement had been in progress with Louis of Nassau, by which the Huguenots should invade

[1] The alcabala or tenth penny—ten per cent. on every sale.

Flanders over the French frontier, in the interest of the Flemish Protestants. However friendly Elizabeth might be with France, this was a proceeding which was sure to be looked upon by English statesmen with profound distrust; and Walsingham, writing to Cecil on the last day of 1571,[1] says that he has been asked whether, in the event of the French entering Flanders, the Queen of England will take Zeeland, as the Flemings fear that the French may not be contented with Flanders. Some time before this, in September, Walsingham had urged Cecil to promote this invasion of Flanders by the French, as a means of keeping the Huguenots in power, as well as embarrassing Spain. "If not," he says, "the Guises will bear sway, who will be so forward in preferring the conquest of Ireland, and the advancement of their niece to the crown of England, as the other side (*i.e.* the Huguenots) is contrariwise bent to prefer the conquest of Flanders." When the immediate danger from the Guises was over, however, the idea of a French invasion of Flanders could not be calmly endured without some corresponding move in English interests, and joint action in the Netherlands was suggested. It is assumed by Motley and most other historians that the capture of Brille by the "beggars" under La Mark early in April was quite unpremeditated, but De Spes warned Alba that the affair was being planned in England at least six months before;[2] and the sending away from Dover of La Mark's fleet did not, as Motley surmises, arise alone from Elizabeth's fear of offending Spain—for that she had already done—but from the complaints of the Easterling merchants that their trade with England had become impossible whilst these freebooters of the seas lay off the coast. In any case, the surprise and seizure of Brille by the "beggars" once more gave Alba plenty to think about on his own side

[1] Foreign State Papers. [2] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

of the Straits; and England might, for the present, breathe freely again.

It had been as necessary for Catharine de Medici as for Elizabeth to provide against the complete domination of England and Scotland by a Spanish-Papal conspiracy in favour of Mary Stuart, and she had seconded Walsingham strenuously in endeavouring to overcome Anjou's religious scruples against marrying Elizabeth. Anjou shifted like the wind, as he fell under the influence of the Guises and his mother alternately. Sometimes the match looked certain, and Catharine was effusive in her thanks to Burghley; the next week it appeared hopeless. But the intrigue served its purpose, and kept the French Government friendly with Elizabeth during the critical time of the Spanish-Guisan conspiracy against her — a conspiracy which also threatened Catharine's influence in France. Burghley himself seems to have been at a loss to understand Elizabeth's real intentions at the time; but it would appear that both he and Walsingham were in earnest in wishing for the Anjou match, of course with the safeguards laid down in Cecil's several minutes on the matter; but "the conferences," wrote the Secretary, "have as many variations as there are days."

When at length it was seen that Anjou would no longer act as a party to the game, but was looking to the possibility of a marriage with Mary Stuart or with a Polish princess, the idea of the marriage of Elizabeth with his youngest brother, the Duke of Alençon, was again very cautiously brought up by Sir Thomas Smith and Killigrew, who were acting as English Ambassadors in France during Walsingham's illness. Alençon was only a lad as yet, and could be used without loss of dignity as a stalking-horse until the treaty of close alliance was finally agreed upon between the two countries.

The inevitable Guido Cavalcanti broached the matter to Burghley in January, as he was coming away from an interview with Elizabeth, and after some conference Burghley himself discussed the matter with the Queen. She was thirty-nine, and the suggested bridegroom was barely seventeen; but she was full of curiosity as to the looks of the suitor, and distrustful about their respective ages. She asked Burghley how tall Alençon was. "About as tall as I am," replied the Secretary. "About as tall as your grandson, you mean," snapped her Majesty,[1] and so the colloquy ended for a time. On the 19th April 1572 the draft treaty between England and France was signed at Blois. It provided that aid was to be given unofficially by both nations to the revolted Hollanders; the fleet of Protestant privateers was to be sheltered and encouraged, and Huguenot Henry of Navarre was to marry the King's sister Margaret. The Protestants and politicians of France had thus for the moment triumphed all along the line; the connection between England and France was closer than it had been for many years, and Elizabeth and Burghley could look back upon a great peril to their nation and their faith manfully met and astutely overcome.

The Catholic party in England was now utterly prostrate. The Duke of Norfolk, condemned to death for treason, was respited again and again by the Queen, whilst he abjectly prevaricated, and threw the blame upon others. The Bishop of Ross and Barker, he said, had forsworn him: he never meant to bring a foreign force to England to depose the Queen, and so forth. From the first, Burghley, who had always been Norfolk's friend, urged the Queen to let the law take its course.[2] He has been bitterly

[1] *Correspondance de la Mothe Fénélon.*

[2] Burghley writes to Walsingham, 11th February 1572, an account of the Queen's vacillation about Norfolk's fate: "Suddenly on Sunday, late at night

blamed for doing so; but seeing the danger to which Norfolk's treason had reduced the realm, he would have failed in his duty as a First Minister if he had allowed any weakness or personal consideration to stand in the way of the just punishment for a great crime. Norfolk, though he was the most popular man and greatest noble in the realm, and still has many apologists, had plotted with the enemies of England to bring the country again under foreign tutelage for his own ambition, and it was right that he should suffer.

That Burghley did not flinch in the case of a man with so many friends, is a proof of his rectitude and his courage. Though Norfolk himself must have known what his attitude was, his esteem for him was evidently not lessened. In the first letter he wrote to the Queen after his condemnation, 21st January 1572, he prays for "her Majesty's forgiveness for his manifold offences, that he may leave this vale of misery with a lighter heart and quieter conscience. He desires that Lord Burghley should act as guardian to his poor orphans," and he signs his letter, "Written by the woeful hand of a dead man, your Majesty's unworthy subject, Thomas Howard"; [1] and when this prayer was granted, he again wrote to the Queen expressing "his

the Queen's Majesty sent for me, and entered into a great misliking that the Duke should die next day, and said she was, and should be, disquieted; and said she would have a new warrant made that night to the sheriffs to forbear, until they should hear further. God's will be fulfilled, and aid her Majesty to do herself good." (Walsingham Papers: Complete Ambassador). In another letter from Burghley to Walsingham a few week's earlier than this, he complains of the Queen's clemency: "The Queen's Majesty has always been a merciful lady, and by mercy she hath taken more harm than by justice, and yet she thinks she is more beloved in doing herself harm." And again: "Here is no small expectation whether the Duke shall die or continue prisoner. I know not how to write, for I am here in my chamber subject to reports which are contrariwise."

[1] Hatfield Papers, part ii.

comfort at hearing of her Majesty's intended goodness to his unfortunate brats, and that she had christened them with such an adopted father as Lord Burghley."[1] At length, when Parliament had added its pressure to that of her minister's, the Queen's real or pretended reluctance to execute her near kinsman was overcome, and the Duke's head fell on Tower Hill, 2nd June, before the lamentations of a great populace, who loved him above any subject of the Queen.

Less than a week afterwards Marshal Montmorenci, Paul de Foix, and a splendid embassy arrived in England for the purpose of formally ratifying the treaty of alliance between England and France, a corresponding embassy from England under Lord Lincoln being in France for a similar purpose. The courts vied with each other in their splendid entertainments. The Frenchmen with forty followers were lodged in Somerset House. At Whitehall, at Windsor (where Montmorenci received the Garter), at Leicester House, and at Cecil House, sumptuous banquets were given, followed by masques, balls, and tourneys. There was much talk about the Duke of Alençon, but no decided answer given by Elizabeth to the hints of marriage, which, indeed, was not now so pressing a matter for her as it had been. When the Frenchmen had taken leave, Burghley sent to Walsingham an interesting letter giving some account of the embassy, by which it is clear that the Queen still desired to keep up the talk of the marriage, in view of a possible need to draw still closer to the French. "I am willed," he writes, "to require you to use all good means to understand what you can of the Duke of Alençon, his age in certainty, of his stature, his conditions, his inclination in religion, his devotion this way, his followers and servitors: hereof

[1] Hatfield Papers, part ii.

her Majesty seeketh speedily to be advertised, that she may resolve before the month." He says, that for his part, he can see no great dislike of the idea, except in the matter of age, and hints at getting Calais as the young Prince's dower. "If somewhat be not advised to recompense the opinion that her Majesty conceiveth, as that she should be misliked to make choice of so young a prince, I doubt the end."[1] When, however, Lincoln came back from France loaded with plate and jewels, and full of praise of the gallantry of Alençon, the Queen became somewhat warmer, and Walsingham for weeks to come was bombarded with minute questions as to the personal qualities, and particularly as to the pock-marked visage, of the suitor.

There was but one more of the great conspirators against England to deal with. Norfolk had deservedly died the death of a traitor, and those who had supported him were either dead or lingering sufferers in prison, the disloyal Catholics were despairing, Spain had received its answer by the expulsion of De Spes and the renewal of the war in the Netherlands, whilst Coligny and the Huguenots rode rough-shod over the Guises and their friends. But the very spring-head of the conspiracy remained untouched. A commission was appointed in June to formulate charges against Mary Stuart herself,[2] and in Parliament it was resolved that she was unworthy to succeed to the English crown. But Elizabeth again allowed her personal feeling to stand in the way of her patriotic duty, or, as some would prefer to say, desired to fix upon others the responsibility of a grave act against her own order and kin. Burghley, in his letter already quoted, written at the end of June to Walsingham, says:

[1] Walsingham Papers.

[2] A copy of the charges with Lord Burghley's signature erased is in Hatfield Papers, part ii.

"Now for Parliament: I cannot write patiently: all that we laboured for, and with full consent brought to fashion, I mean a law to make the Scottish Queen unable and unworthy of succession of the crown, was by her Majesty neither assented to nor rejected, but deferred until the feast of All Saints; but what all other good and wise men think thereof, you may guess. Some here have, as it seemeth, abused their favour about her Majesty, to make herself her most enemy. God amend them."[1]

A fortnight after this letter was written Burghley was made Lord Treasurer of England in place of the Marquis of Winchester, who had recently died. The work and strain of the Secretaryship had gravely affected Burghley's health, and early in the previous April he had been so ill that his life was despaired of. De Guaras, the merchant who acted informally as Spanish agent, says that the Queen and most of the Councillors visited him, in the belief that his state was desperate.[2] For some time he had been begging for permission to rest, but until the great matters in hand were settled, this was impos-

[1] There was in the Parliament in question a strong Puritan element. An attempt was made by it to alter the rites of the Established Church in the Genevan direction, which Elizabeth regarded as an interference with her prerogative; and the pressure put upon her to consent to the trial of Mary Stuart led her to dismiss the Parliament, which did not meet again till 1575. When Parliament did meet again, the clemency of the Queen towards Mary was made a source of complaint by the Puritan Wentworth, who was imprisoned for his undutiful speech. For the consultation and report of the joint committee of the two Houses in 1572 respecting Mary Stuart, see D'Ewes' "Compleat Journal."

[2] It is probable that on this occasion the Queen made the celebrated remark to Burghley's servant. He told her Majesty, who wore a very high head-dress, that it would be necessary to stoop to enter the door of the chamber where the sick man lay. "For your master only will I stoop," said the Queen, "but not for the King of Spain." It may be worth while to repeat De Guaras' remark when giving an account of this sickness of Burghley. The latter had been showing an inclination to come to terms with Spain about the seizures (it was shortly before the French alliance was signed), and his illness had interrupted the negotiations. "If this man dies," writes

sible. The sky over England had once more become cleared, and the great minister could hand over to his old friend Sir Thomas Smith the Secretaryship, in which he had done such signal service to the State.

The day after the elevation of Burghley to the Treasurership, the Queen started on one of the stately progresses which caused so much delight and enthusiasm to all her subjects but those who had to entertain her, except perhaps Burghley and his rival Leicester, who were both honoured during this summer with a visit from the sovereign. Burghley's entry of the great event comes curtly enough in his diary after the memorandum of his new appointment, thus :—

"1572. July 15. Lord Burghley made Lord Treasurer of England."

"July 22. The Queen's Majesty at Theobalds."[1]

Elizabeth had visited Theobalds in 1564 and 1571. On this occasion her stay extended over three days, and the domestic biographer of Burghley thus refers to this amongst other visits: "His Lordship's extraordinary chardg in enterteynment of the Quene was greater to him than to anie of her subjects, for he enterteyned her at his house twelve several tymes, which cost him two or three thousand pounds each tyme. . . . But his love for his Sovereign, and joy to enterteyn her and her traine, was so greate, as he thought no troble, care, nor cost too much, and all too little."

De Guaras, "it will be very unfortunate for the purpose which he declared to me. . . . It is true that hitherto he has undoubtedly been the enemy of peace and tranquillity, for his own bad ends; but I am convinced that he is now well disposed, which means that the Queen and Council are so, for he, and no one else, rules the whole affairs of the State. God grant that if it be for His service he may live." (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, vol. ii.)

[1] These are the dates in the diary, but they do not quite agree with the entries in the little Perpetual Calendar at Hatfield, which run thus :—

"19 July 1572. W. Cecill admiss. Thesaurus Angl.

"19 July 1572. Quene's Majestie at Theobalds, 5 to 6."

Whilst Elizabeth slowly made her way from one great house to another, by Gorhambury,[1] Dunstable, Woburn,[2] and so to Kenilworth, the correspondence on the negotiations for the Alençon match became warmer and warmer. Agents and messengers speeded backwards and forwards with portraits and amiable trifles, particularly from the side of England.

There was a good reason for this. Before even the treaty of alliance was signed, Burghley had deplored that Charles IX. and his mother were cooling in the agreement for France and England jointly to aid the Flemish rebels. The Pope and the Emperor were trying their hardest to withdraw Charles and his mother from the compromise into which he had entered with Elizabeth; and already the young King and Catharine de Medici were discovering that Coligny and the Huguenots, when they had the upper hand, could be as domineering and tyrannical as the Guises themselves. Paris was in seething discontent that the beloved Guises were in disgrace, and Charles found his throne tottering. To add to his fears from the Catholics, the Huguenot force that had entered Flanders under Genlis had been routed and destroyed by the Spaniards (19th July), and it was clear to Catharine and her son, that if they did not promptly cut themselves free from Elizabeth's attack on Spanish interests, they would be dragged down when the Huguenots fell. The very day that the news of Genlis' defeat arrived in Paris,

[1] A curious letter from Sir Nicholas Bacon to Burghley respecting this visit is in Lansdowne MSS., 14 (printed by Ellis), in which he prays for advice and guidance, "ffor in very deede no man is more rawe in such a matter than myself" (12th July 1572. Gorhambury).

[2] There is another letter in the same collection from the Earl of Bedford to Burghley, begging him to arrange that the Queen should not stay at Woburn longer than two nights and a day. "I pray god the Rowmes and Lodgings there may be to her Majesty's contentation for the tyme. . . . They should be better than they be" (15th July 1572. Russell House).

a young noble named La Mole was sent flying to England, ostensibly to confer with the Queen on the Alençon match. There was no particular reason for roughly breaking off that, and so offending Elizabeth; but the sending of a mere schoolboy like La Mole with only vague instructions about the proposed joint action in Flanders would show that Charles IX. did not intend to take any further responsibility in that direction.

La Mole arrived in London on 27th July, and had a long midnight interview with Burghley at the French Embassy. He ostensibly only came from Alençon—not from the King—and when, a few days afterwards, he saw the Queen privately at Kenilworth, though he was full of fine lovelorn compliments from Alençon, he could only say from the King that the latter could not openly declare himself in the matter of Flanders. He suggested prudence, and fears of a league of Catholic powers against him. He talked about the strength of Portugal and Savoy, and generally cried off from his bargain. This was ill news for Elizabeth, for there were hundreds of Englishmen in arms in Holland, and brave Sir Humphrey Gilbert and his band were besieging Ter Goes. But the English Queen made the best of it, and sought to redress matters by pushing the Alençon match more warmly than ever, and petting and caressing La Mole, who accompanied her on her progress towards Windsor. Burghley and the experienced Smith seem to have been as firmly convinced as young La Mole himself, that the Queen was in earnest, and would really, at last, make up her mind to marry Alençon. In her conversations with La Mole and Fénélon she smoothed away all difficulties. Walsingham had made a great mistake, she said, in declaring that Alençon's youth was an insuperable difficulty; and much more to the same effect. But it is curious that all this artless prattle, all this coy

coquetry of the Queen, so spontaneous in appearance, had in substance been carefully previously drafted by Burghley, and the drafts are still at Hatfield. Whilst Charles IX. was hesitating and looking askance at the dominant Huguenots, the latter were assuring Burghley and Walsingham that all would be well directly. Henry of Navarre was to be married to the Princess Margaret, and this would give them a pretext for gathering so strong a force of their party that they could make the King do as they pleased.[1]

But Elizabeth and the Huguenots had no monopoly of cunning, and whilst the billing and cooing with La Mole went on, the massacre of St. Bartholomew was being secretly planned, and every effort was being made by the French King to draw England into a position of overt hostility to Spain, whilst he remained unpledged. The Ambassador, Fénélon, and young La Mole, left the Queen, and returned to London on the 27th August. On the same day there arrived at Rye two couriers from Paris, one from Walsingham to the Queen and Burghley, the other to the French Ambassador. The French courier was detained, and his papers sent forward with Walsingham's despatches to the Queen. The news of the great crime of St. Bartholomew fell upon Elizabeth and her court like a death-knell; for it seemed that at last the threatened crusade against Protestantism had begun, and that England was struck at as well as the Huguenots. All rejoicings were stopped, mourning garb was assumed, and the gay devices of masques and mummeries gave way to anxious conferences and plans for defence. Affrighted Protestants by the thousand came flying across the Channel in any craft that would

[1] Spanish State Papers, 22nd July 1572, a month before St. Bartholomew. If this be true, it to some extent confirms the subsequent allegations of the Catholics as to a plot of the Huguenots.

sail; from mouth to mouth in England ran the dreadful story of unprovoked and wanton slaughter, and on every side the old English feeling of hatred and distrust of the false Frenchmen came uppermost again. On the 7th September, La Mothe Fénélon was received by the Queen at Woodstock in dead silence, and surrounded by all the signs of mourning. He made the best of a bad matter: talked of a plot of Coligny and the Huguenots to seize the Louvre, urged that the massacre was unpremeditated, and hoped that the friendship between France and England would continue uninterrupted. But Elizabeth knew that such a friendship could only be a snare for her whilst the Guises were paramount, and she dismissed the Ambassador with a plain indication of her opinion.

Two days afterwards Burghley penned a long letter from the Council to Walsingham, dictating the steps to be taken for the protection of English interests; and he accompanied it by a private note, in which the Lord Treasurer's own view is frankly set forth. "I see," he says, "the devil is suffered by Almighty God for our sins to be strong in following the persecution of Christ's members, and therefore we are not only vigilant of our own defence against such trayterous attempts as lately have been put in use there in France, but also to call ourselves to repentance. . . . The King assures her Majesty that the navy prepared by Strozzi shall not in any way endamage her Majestie; but we have great cause in these times to doubt all fair speeches, and therefore we do presently put all the sea-coasts in defence, and mean to send her Majesty's navy to sea with speed, and so to continue until we see further whereunto to trust."[1]

Not many days after the massacre, Catharine de

[1] Foreign State Papers; *in extenso* in Digges.

Medici saw the mistake she had made in allowing the Guises a free hand, and she and the King did their best by protestations to Walsingham, and through Fénélon and Castelnau de la Mauvissière, to draw closer to Elizabeth again. Alençon did much more. He went to Walsingham, swore vengeance upon the murderers, and expressed his intention of escaping from court and secretly flying to England. By an emissary of his own he sent an extravagant love-letter to the Queen, and ostentatiously took the Huguenot side, whilst Anjou was on the side of the League. Elizabeth did not wish to break with France, for her safety once more depended upon avoiding isolation; but she was still deeply distrustful. Smith, in sending the Queen's answer to Walsingham, quaintly defines her attitude towards the French: "You may perceive by her Majesty's answer, that she will not refuse the interview nor marriage, but yet she cometh near to them *tam timido et suspenso pede*, that they may have good cause to doubt. The answer to De la Mothe is *addulced* so much as may, for she would have it so. You have a busie piece of work to decypher that which in words is designed to the extremitie, in deeds is more than manifest; neither you shall open the one, nor shall they cloak the other. The best is, thank God, we stand upon our guard, nor I trust shall be taken and killed asleep, as Coligny was. The greatest matter for her Majestie, and our safety and defence, is earnestly of us attempted, nor yet achieved, nor utterly in despair, but rather in hope."[1]

For the next few months this firm attitude of watchfulness was maintained, whilst the outward demonstrations of friendship between Catharine and Elizabeth became gradually more cordial, thanks largely to the

[1] Smith to Walsingham, 27th September (Foreign State Papers; *in extenso* in Digges).

influence in the English court of the special envoy Castelnau de la Mauvissière. Elizabeth consented to act as sponsor for the French King's infant daughter; Alençon's envoy, Maisonfleur, with the knowledge of Burghley, sent to his master a plan for his escape to England with Navarre and Condé, and assured him that the Queen would marry him if he came. But all this diplomatic finesse did not for a moment stay the grim determination of the Queen and her Council to provide against treachery, from whatever quarter it might come. All along the coast the country stood on guard. Portsmouth, Plymouth, the Thames, and Harwich were swarming with shipping, armed to the teeth for the succour of stern Protestant Rochelle against the Catholics, and to aid the Netherlanders in their struggle.[1] The Huguenots of Guienne, Languedoc, and Gascony had recovered somewhat from the shock of St. Bartholomew, and were arming for their defence; and to them also went English money, arms, and encouragement. At Elizabeth's court the Vidame de Chartres and the Count de Montgomerie were honoured guests and busy agents, whilst in France the young Princes of Navarre and Condé were daily being pledged deeper to the cause of Protestantism and England. The German princes, too, as profoundly shocked at the treacherous massacre as Elizabeth herself, drew nearer to the Queen, who was now regarded throughout Europe as the head of the Protestant confederacy.

It was soon seen that, though St. Bartholomew had given more power to the Guises, it had also strengthened

[1] When Orange entered Brabant in September he sent an envoy to England to ask for aid. An agent at once started from London with £16,000 in money, and a few days afterwards £30,000 in bills on Hamburg were sent, for which the Prince wrote thanking Burghley. Large quantities of stores were also shipped from England, and a force of 12,000 men collected at the ports in case of emergency.

and consolidated the reformers rather than destroyed them. Month after month Anjou, at the head of the Catholic royal army, cast his men fruitlessly against the impregnable walls of Rochelle, well supplied as the town was with stores by Montgomerie's fleet from England, until at last in the spring of 1573 it was seen by Catharine and her sons that they had failed to crush the reformers of France, and they were glad to make terms with the heroic Rochellais, where the besiegers, plague-stricken, starving, and disheartened, were in far worse case than the beleaguered. Anjou, to his brothers' and mother's delight, was elected to the vacant throne of Poland, and a full amnesty was signed for the Huguenots (June 1573); complete religious liberty being accorded in the towns of Rochelle, Montauban, and Nismes, whilst private Protestant worship was allowed throughout France.

CHAPTER XI

1572–1576

ONE of the first effects of the massacre of St. Bartholomew was an approach on the part of Burghley to the Spanish agent in England. The object probably was to keep in touch and to learn what was going on, whilst arousing the jealousy of the French, and, above all, to reopen English trade with Flanders and Spain. In any case, the cordiality of so great a personage as the Lord Treasurer quite turned the head of simple-minded, vain Antonio de Guaras, who suddenly found himself treated as an important diplomatist, and for the rest of his life tried, but disastrously, to live up to the character.[1] Soon after the expulsion of De Spes, one of Burghley's agents had opened up communications with De Guaras, which resulted in an interview between the latter and the Lord Treasurer. The minister was graciousness itself, and quite dazzled the merchant. There was nothing, he assured him, that he desired more than an agreement with Spain on all points; and though it all came to nothing at the time, and shortly afterwards the Flemish Commissioners were curtly dismissed, a letter was handed to Guaras late in August 1572 to be sent to Alba, making professions of willingness to negotiate for a reopening of trade, and to withdraw the English troops from Flanders. Before the reply came in October the massacre of St. Bartholomew had taken place, and when De Guaras

[1] See his letters in Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth; and also "Antonio de Guaras," by Richard Garnett, LLD.

went to Burghley at Hampton Court with a letter from Alba he found him all smiles. "The Queen was only remarking yesterday," said he, "that she wondered Antonio de Guaras did not come to court with a reply to the message offering to withdraw the Englishmen who were helping the rebels." They were only sent there, said Burghley, to prevent Frenchmen from gaining a footing. He was overjoyed to receive Alba's kind letter, and took it to the Queen at once, though she had already sickened with the smallpox, which a day or two afterwards declared itself. He hoped, he said, that God would pardon those who had caused the dissension between the two countries; and the Queen was most willing to come to terms. He expressed delight at the reported successes of Alba. He compared Spaniards with Frenchmen, greatly to the disadvantage of the latter, and "he said more against the French than I did, speaking with great reverence of our King, and of so courageous a Prince, which were the words he applied to your Excellency" (Alba).

The delighted merchant was pressed to stay to supper to meet such great personages as the Earl of Sussex, the Lord Chamberlain, and others; and the next day he was in conference with Burghley for hours, with the result that the latter consented to draw up a new draft treaty for the reopening of trade, one of the clauses of which was to touch upon the tender subject of the treatment extended by the Inquisition to English merchants and mariners in Spain. Burghley hinted to De Guaras that some of the Council were against an accord, but he persuaded him that his own feelings were all in favour of a renewal of the close understanding with the House of Burgundy. De Guaras was backwards and forwards to court for weeks, more charmed than ever with the Lord Treasurer's amiability. "It is," he says, "undoubted

that a great amount of dissension exists in the Council, some being friendly to our side, and others to the French; but the best Councillor of all of them is Lord Burghley, as he follows the tendency of the Queen, which is towards concord. As he is supreme in the country and in the Queen's estimation, in all the important Councils which were held during the days that I was at court, he, with his great eloquence, having right on his side, was able to persuade those who were opposed to him. He assured me privately that he had gained over the great majority of his opponents, and especially the Earl of Leicester, who has always been on the side of the French."[1] Burghley could be very persuasive and talkative when it suited him, as it very rarely did. The French, he said, were most anxious for a close alliance, but the Queen and himself set but small store on "these noisy French and Italians."

A Spanish spy in London, unknown to De Guaras, scornfully wrote to Alba that Lord Burghley was playing with De Guaras; and before many weeks had passed, the latter himself had begun to doubt. Burghley passed him in his ante-room three times without so much as noticing him. "Some great plot against the Spaniards in Flanders" was hatching, he was sure; "and in one moment they decided that their false news was of more importance than our friendship." "Whilst this Government exists, no good arrangement will be made, as the Queen only desires it from fear, and the rest will oppose it on religious grounds." When De Guaras saw the Lord Treasurer later in November (1572), grave doubts were expressed about the *bona fides* of Philip, much to the Spaniard's indignation. Burghley said he was still strongly in favour of an arrangement, because the French, who wished the English wool trade to go to France instead

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

of Flanders, were so shifty, and could not be trusted. The Queen would be glad, too, to mediate between Spain and the Prince of Orange. Thus Burghley played on the hopes and fears of Spain; but through the whole negotiation it was clear that the objects were—first, if possible, to reopen the ports for English trade on profitable terms;[1] and, secondly, to keep Spain in hand, pending the development of events in France, and the strengthening of Orange for his forthcoming campaign.

In the meanwhile Sir Humphrey Gilbert and his 800 Englishmen were recalled from Flanders, and the elaborate pretence made that he was in disgrace for having gone thither at all against the Queen's wish; and other demonstrations were made, especially by Burghley, of a desire to agree on friendly conditions with Spain. As weeks passed without any reply coming from Alba to the draft treaty, Burghley grew distrustful, and, as De Guaras complains, coldly passed him without recognising him. At last, late in December, he sent for the Spaniard and made a speech, which, De Guaras says, sounded as if it had been studied. "He hoped," he said, "that the good-will of himself and his friends would be recognised. Some of the Councillors thought that De Guaras had been playing them false,[2] and his (Burghley's) party was much

[1] How deeply interested Burghley was in the question of trade is seen in the active efforts he was making at this time to establish the Flemish fugitives in various parts of England, to exercise the handicrafts in which they excelled. During the negotiations with De Guaras, he was establishing a community of cloth-workers in his own town of Stamford, lodging them at first in a house of his own, giving them a church and aiding them with money. (Dr. Cunningham's "Alien Emigrants in England"; State Papers, Domestic; and Strype's Parker.)

[2] Burghley, on a previous occasion, had frightened De Guaras out of his wits by charging him with conspiring against the Queen. Throughout the whole negotiation the Spaniards were alternately flattered and threatened. De Guaras himself was one day overjoyed with Burghley's amiability and admiration for all things and men Spanish; and the next day cast into the

annoyed that no answer had come, especially about the simultaneous opening of the ports." All the while the vigorous support of Orange's preparations went on; money, men, and arms flowed over in abundance (early in 1573); and the Dutch agents were in England urging Elizabeth openly to take Holland and Zeeland under her protection, and to lend national countenance to the struggle against Spain. She was not prepared for this yet, for France was under the influence of the Guises, and their intrigues in Scotland left her no rest. But Alba was afraid of the bare possibility of a great Protestant league of English, Germans, and Huguenots, in favour of Orange; and his pride was humbled more by this than by professions of friendship. The result of Burghley's negotiations through De Guaras, and the aiding of Orange, was that in the summer of 1573 the Flemish and Spanish ports were once more opened to English trade, on terms immensely favourable to England,[1] since she obtained a free market for her cloth, whilst she kept the great bulk of the enormous amount of Spanish property which Elizabeth had seized five years previously. This was a greater exemplification of the impotence of Philip, even than the expulsion of De Spes. All the world could see now that, much as his Inquisition might harry individual Englishmen, the King could neither defend nor avenge the injuries done to himself; and was obliged to overlook the presence of

depths of gloom, by haughty indifference, or hints at punishment for treason, of which the poor man was as yet quite innocent; or, again, by talk of the diversion of all English trade to France or Hamburg, the abundant aid being sent to Orange, or the welcoming of the Dutch privateers into English ports. The negotiation and its result are a good specimen of Lord Burghley's diplomatic methods.

[1] The documents relating to the protracted negotiations with regard to the seizures, and the resumption of trade, will be found in the Cotton MSS., Galba ciii., civ., cv., cvi., and Vesp. cxiii.

armed English regiments on the side of his rebellious subjects, for the sake of retaining the profit brought to his dominions by English commerce. Burghley had at all events established one fact, namely, that, for the present, Philip alone could do no harm.

The struggles between the Protestants and Catholics in Scotland had continued almost without interruption since the death of Murray. Mary's friends were still numerous and strong amongst the aristocratic and landed classes, and were supported, as we have seen, by Spanish and papal money, as well as by Guisan intrigue. The Regent Lennox had been murdered by the Hamiltons (September 1571), and his successor (Mar) had died of poison or a broken heart (November 1572); but with the advent of Morton, a man of stronger fibre, the Protestant cause became more aggressive, and the English influence over Scotland more decided. Shortly before this happened, when the effects of St. Bartholomew were still weighing on the English court, and it was known that Catharine de Medici and her son were as busy with the Archbishop of Glasgow in supporting the Hamiltons and Gordons as was Cardinal Lorraine himself, secret instructions were given to Killigrew, the English Ambassador in Scotland, to take a step which under any other circumstances would have been inexcusable. The secret instructions are drafted in Burghley's hand, and more obloquy has been piled upon his memory in consequence of them than for any other action in his career; even his thick-and-thin apologist, Dr. Nares, confessing that he could only look upon Killigrew's orders "with feelings of disgust and horror." Killigrew's open mission was to reconcile the King's party with those who championed the cause of his mother, and especially with Kirkaldy of Grange and Lethington, who still held Edinburgh Castle; but his secret instructions

were to a different effect. He was to warn the Protestants that a second St. Bartholomew might be intended in Scotland—not by any means an improbable suggestion, considering who were the promoters of the original massacre. "But you are also chosen to deal in a third matter of far greater moment." The continuance of the Queen of Scots in England, he is told, is considered dangerous, and it is deemed desirable that she should be sent to Scotland and delivered to the Regent (Mar), "if it might be wrought that they themselves should secretly require it, with good assurance to deal with her by way of justice, that she should receive that which she hath deserved, whereby no further peril should ensue from her escaping, or by setting her up again. Otherwise the Council of England will never assent to deliver her out of the realm; and for assurance, none can suffice but hostages of good value—that is, some children of the Regent and the Earl of Morton."[1] The suggestion was not a chivalrous or a generous one. It meant nothing less than handing over the unfortunate Mary to her enemies to be executed, and so to rid Elizabeth of her troublesome guest without responsibility. Killigrew was Burghley's brother-in-law, and the two, with Leicester and the Queen, were the only persons acquainted with the intention.

On his arrival in Edinburgh the new envoy found the Protestants profoundly moved by the news of the massacre in Paris; Knox, paralysed and on the brink of the grave, used his last remaining spark of life to denounce the Guises and the Papists who had forged the murder plot against the people of God. Killigrew found Morton ready and eager to help in the sacrifice of Mary, but Mar held back; and Burghley and Leicester wrote,

[1] Hatfield Papers; *in extenso* in Murdin; also State Papers, Scotland.

urging speed in the matter.[1] When the terms of the Scots at last were sent to Burghley, it was seen that, though they were willing to have Mary killed, they would not relieve Elizabeth of the responsibility.[2] The death of Mar put an end for a time to the negotiation, which was never seriously undertaken again, as it was clear that the Scots would drive too hard a bargain to suit Elizabeth.

It is my province to explain facts rather than to apologise for them, and the explanation of the plan to cause Mary to be judicially murdered in Scotland must be sought in the panic which seized upon the Protestants after St. Bartholomew. The massacre was generally believed to be only a part of a plan for the universal extirpation of the reformers, in which it was known that Mary Stuart's friends and relatives were the prime movers, and one of the main objects was represented to be the raising of Mary to the throne of a Catholic Great Britain. So long as this belief existed, no step was inexcusable that aimed at frustrating so diabolical and widespread a conspiracy. That Burghley himself was not sensible of any turpitude in the matter may be seen from a letter written by him to Walsingham on the 14th January 1573, begging him to discover the

[1] See letters in Cotton MSS., Caligula, ciii.

[2] The terms were—that the hostages should be delivered within four hours of the surrender of Mary; that James should be taken under the protection of Elizabeth, and his rights remain intact, and be recognised by the English Parliament; that a defensive alliance should be concluded between the two countries; that the Earls of Bedford, Huntingdon, and Essex should be present at the Queen's execution with a force of 3000 men, and immediately afterwards join the King's troops to reduce Edinburgh Castle, which should then be delivered to the Regent; and, finally, that all arrears of pay owing to the Scottish army should be paid by England. The Spanish agents attributed the failure of Killigrew's mission to the efforts of De Croc, the French Ambassador in Scotland. Elizabeth told the latter, when she saw him in London in October, that she was well aware of all his plots in Scotland. Her uneasiness at the time was increased by the news of the arrival in Paris of Cardinal Orsini, a papal envoy with a fresh plan for the release of Mary.

author of a book printed in Paris, in which he and Bacon are scurrilously accused of plans against Norfolk and Mary. "God amend his spirit," he says, referring to the author, "and confound his malice. As for my part, if I have any such malicious or malignant spirit, God presently so confound my body to ashes and my soul to perpetual torment in hell."[1]

How soon Catharine de Medici and her son regretted the false step of St. Bartholomew is seen by their attitude towards England early in the following year (1573). The Archbishop of Glasgow was plainly told that no more help could be given to his mistress, Cardinal Lorraine failed ignominiously to draw France into renewed activity on behalf of the League, and Charles IX. considered it necessary to apologise to Elizabeth for the presence in his court of the special papal envoy already referred to. It was seen also that the blood and iron policy of Alba had ended in failure: the revolt in the Netherlands was stronger than ever, Holland was entirely in the hands of Orange, and most of the Catholic provinces of Flanders even had broken from their Spanish allegiance. Under these circumstances it seemed possible that the secular dream of Frenchmen might eventually come to pass, and the fine harbours and busy towns of Belgium might fall to the share of France. But this could only be if she had a close understanding and made common cause with England. So once more the Alençon marriage was vigorously pushed to the front by Catharine. In February the French Ambassador saw Elizabeth, and formally prayed her to give an answer whether she would marry the Prince or not. If she would only let them know her pleasure now, the King and Queen-mother would trouble her no more. It was a good opportunity, and Elizabeth

[1] State Papers, Foreign. See also Burghley's letters to Copley. Roxburghe Club.

made the most of it. Fair terms must be given to the Huguenots in Rochelle, she said, and on condition that this was done, she would give an answer about Alençon through Lord Burghley. On the 18th February the Lord Treasurer made his formal speech. The Queen would never marry a man she had never seen. If the Prince liked to come over, even secretly, he would be welcome; but in any case an interview had better precede the discussion of religion, because if the lovers did not fancy each other, the question of conscience would be a convenient pretext for breaking off the negotiation; but still no public exercise of Catholic worship must be expected. When Burghley sent to Walsingham a copy of his speech, he added for his private information: "I see the imminent perils to this State, and . . . the success (*i.e.* the succession) of the crown manifestly uncertain, or rather so manifestly prejudicial to the state of religion, that I cannot but still persist in seeking marriage for her Majesty, and finding no way that is liking to her but this of the Duke, I do force myself to pursue it with desire, and do fancy myself with imaginations that if he do come hither her Majesty would not refuse him. . . . If I am deceived, yet for the time it easeth me to imagine that such a sequel may follow."[1] This was uncertain enough; but Walsingham was even less encouraging. He was sick of the whole hollow business; profoundly distrustful of the French; and, moreover, was a friend of Leicester, who constantly plied him with letters deprecating the match. This, then, is how he managed cleverly to stand in with Burghley whilst serving Leicester. "Touching my private opinion of the marriage, the great impediment that I find in the same is the contentment of the eye. The gentleman, sure, is void of any good favour, besides the

[1] Foreign State Papers; *in extenso* in Digges.

blemish of the small pocks. Now, when I weigh the same with the delicateness of her Majesty's eye, and considering also that there are some about her in credit, who in respect of their particular interests, have neither regard for her Majesty, nor to the preservation of our country from ruine, and will rather increase the misliking by defacing him than by dutifully laying before her the necessity of marriage . . . I hardly think there will ever grow any liking. . . . Whether this marriage be sincerely meant here or not is a hard point to judge . . . in my opinion I think rather no than yea."[1] This was almost the last letter written by Walsingham as Ambassador. He was recalled, to be shortly afterwards appointed joint-Secretary of State with Sir Thomas Smith, with the intention of still further relieving Burghley from routine labour; and Dr. Dale, as Ambassador in Paris, kept alive the ridiculous, and frequently insincere, discussion of the marriage of Elizabeth and Alençon.[2]

Burghley's labours and anxieties were not confined to foreign affairs. His interest in the uniformity and discipline of the Anglican Church was unceasing, and especially in connection with his Chancellorship of Cambridge University, gave him endless anxiety. The vestments controversy had now widened and deepened. The famous tract called "An Admonition to Parliament" had been presented to the Parliament of 1572 by Cartwright; and its violence in a Puritan direction had provoked a controversy, which, at the period now under consideration (1573), had developed on one side into a bitter antagonism to prelacy, and even sacerdotalism in all its forms. Both parties appealed to Burghley. He made a speech in the Star Chamber which left no

[1] Foreign State Papers; *in extenso* in Digges.

[2] The progress of each stage in the complicated business is related in the author's "Courtships of Queen Elizabeth."

doubt as to his attitude, if any such ever existed, on the point. The Queen, he said, was determined to have the laws obeyed. No innovation of ritual or practice would be permitted. If any of the "novelists" were under the impression that departures from the rules laid down would remain unpunished, he disabused their minds. A Fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge, named Chark, violently attacked the hierarchy from the University pulpits, and was admonished. He persisted, and was ejected from his Fellowship. Another Cambridge man, Edward Dering, Lecturer at St. Paul's Cathedral, acted similarly, and was summoned before the Privy Council, and was suspended from his preferment. At the instance of Bishop Sandys[1] he was restored, but again brought before the Star Chamber when he addressed a long letter to Burghley advocating his views. Whilst Leicester always favoured the Puritans, the Lord Treasurer was thus on the side of the law and the prelates; and though he was constantly chosen as arbiter, even by those with whom he disagreed, he never wavered in his insistence on the maintenance of uniformity, and obedience to the prescriptions laid down by Parliament and the rulers of the Church.[2]

Notwithstanding the appointment of two Secretaries

[1] The Bishop of London's letter to Burghley is at Hatfield, part ii.; *in extenso* in Murdin. "These be dangerous days," he says, "full of itching ears mislying their minds, and ready to forget all obedience and duty. . . . A soft plaister is better than a sharp corosy to apply to this sore. . . . If Mr. Deryng be somewhat spared, yet wal scoled, the others, being manifest offenders, may be dealt withal according to their deserts" (3rd June 1573).

[2] In one case his love of justice had an unfortunate termination. A crazy Puritan named Birchett stabbed Sir John Hawkins in the Strand, under the belief that he was Sir Christopher Hatton, the declared rival of Leicester in the Queen's affection; and it was surmised also, his opponent in his Puritan leanings. The Queen issued a commission for Birchett's summary trial and punishment by martial law, but was persuaded by Burghley to remand him to safe custody for further inquiries. He was imprisoned in the Lollard's Tower, and a few days afterwards killed his keeper. He was clearly a maniac, but the affair brought great odium upon Puritanism, and led to the arrest of Mr.

of State, which somewhat relieved him from writing despatches, almost every matter, great and small, was still referred to Burghley. We have given instances of his activity in foreign and ecclesiastical affairs; but, as Ellis[1] truly says, "from a question of peace or war, down to a regulation for the lining of slop hose; from quarrels at court to the bickering between a schoolmaster and his scholar; from the arrest of a peer to the punishment of a cutpurse—all was reported to him, and by all parties in turn his favour was craved."

It must have been difficult for him to keep clear of court factions and scandal; but though it was notorious that Leicester always opposed him, they still remained outwardly friendly, and their letters to each other are full of civil expressions. Sussex and Hatton were for ever at feud with Leicester. Alençon's amorous agents scandalised all beholders by their open flirting with the Queen, to which Leicester retorted by making violent love to two sisters, Lady Sheffield and Frances Howard; and the light-hearted and light-heeled young Earl of Oxford, Burghley's son-in-law at this time (1573), had danced himself into the good graces of the erotic Queen, which he soon lost by his folly. Stern Lady Burghley openly and imprudently condemned this philandering, and the Queen fell into a rage with her; yet "my Lord Treasurer, even after his old manner, dealeth with matters of the State only, and beareth himself very uprightly. . . . At all these love matters my Lord Treasurer winketh, and will not meddle any way."[2]

Cartwright, the leader of the party. It is to be noticed that Burghley provided suitable preferment for all the eminent Puritan nonconformists who were dismissed from their positions in the Church; Cartwright, Lever, and Sampson being made respectively "masters" of charitable foundations where their opinions on ritual were of little importance.

[1] Original letters, Ellis.

[2] Gilbert Talbot to the Earl of Shrewsbury, 9th May 1573 (Lodge's Illustrations).

Burghley's private correspondence with his steward, Kemp, at Burghley, at this period, shows that his care for detail in his household management was as unwearied as ever. One letter written in June 1573 by Kemp is very curious. Burghley's mother was still alive, but, of course, very aged. She appears to have become unduly penurious as to her garb, and her son had ordered a dress for the old lady. The steward writes: "Mr. Thomas Cecil came home well, and my mistress, your mother, came to Burghley two hours before him. The gown that you would make, it must be for every day, and yet because it comes from you (except you write to her to the contrary) she will make it her holiday gown; whereof she hath great store already, both of silk and cloth. But I think, sir, if you make her one of cloth, with some velvet on it, with your letter to desire her for your sake to wear it daily, she would accustom herself to it; so as she would forget to go any longer in such base apparel as she hath used to have a delight in, which is too mean for one of a lower estate than she is." The old lady also desired a chaplain for service twice a day; and by Burghley's endorsement on the letter, it is evident that the gown and the chaplain were sent to her.

During the Queen's great progress through Kent and Sussex in the autumn, Burghley attended her; and whilst the court was at Eridge, the Treasurer, not without difficulty, persuaded the Queen to accede to Mary Stuart's request, through the Earl of Shrewsbury, that she should be allowed to visit the baths of Buxton, whither shortly afterwards Burghley himself went for his own malady,[1]

[1] The number and variety of remedies sent to Burghley from all parts of the world for the cure of the gout are truly marvellous. We have already mentioned some in an earlier page, but they became much more frequent after this year (1573), when a Mr. Dyon sent one which Burghley endorses as "Recipe pro podagra," as well as Lady Harrington. Dr. Nuñes, the Queen's Portuguese physician, sent quite a collection of nostrums in Latin,

and saw the unhappy Queen, whom on this occasion, at all events, he impressed not unfavourably.[1] During the Queen's progress, which was on a more lavish scale even than usual,[2] a determined attempt was made—and, according to one of Mary Stuart's letters from Buxton, not quite unsuccessfully—to arouse Elizabeth's distrust of Burghley. Simultaneously there were sent to the Queen, to Burghley, to Bacon, and the principal courtiers and ecclesiastics, another violent book printed in France against Burghley and the Lord Keeper. A copy was sent to the Queen by Lord Windsor, a refugee on the Continent, with great professions of attachment, and hints evidently directed against Burghley, "although for my part, in mine opinion, I suppose he is too wise to be overtaken in many of those things which he is touched withal."[3] Burghley received his copy from an unknown hand in Canterbury Cathedral precincts, where he was lodged, and it appears quite to have upset his equanimity. He wrote (11th September 1573) to the Archbishop (Parker) bitterly resenting the attack at such a time "by some domestic hidden scorpion." "If God and our consciences were not our defence and consolation against these pestilential darts, we might well be weary of our lives." Parker

and a German doctor recommended certain medicated slippers; a tincture of gold was advocated by a Nicholas Gybberd, and the Earl of Shrewsbury was loud in his praises of "oyle of stagg's blood." Most of the recipes mentioned will be found in the Lansdowne MSS., 18, 21, 27, 29, 39, and 42.

[1] See letters from Mary, in Labanoff, vol. iv. Elizabeth showed some amount of jealous suspicion at Burghley's interview with Mary, of which Leicester and the Treasurer's enemies made the most during his absence.

[2] Burghley, as Lord Treasurer, seems to have been seriously concerned at the heavy cost of these progresses. In the Lansdowne MSS., 16, there is a document, altered and corrected by Lord Burghley himself, of this date (1573), showing how the royal household expenses had been increased by this particular progress. It is to be deduced from the document that extra expenditure entailed was £1034, os. 6d.

[3] See a curious letter from Lord Windsor to Burghley, 10th January 1574, exculpating himself for this letter (Hatfield Papers, part ii., No. 181).

returned "the mad book, so outrageously penned that malice hath made him blind. I judge it not worth an answer." Bacon was less disturbed with the matter than his brother-in-law, and summarises the contents of the book as follows: "It consisteth of three points. Chiefly it is to change the religion that now is; 2nd, to establish the Scottish Queen's party; and, 3rd, is an invective against us two. I like the conjunction of the matter, though I mislike the impudent lies of the author to maintain it."

The accession of Morton to the Regency of Scotland had been followed by the complete collapse of Mary's cause there. Killigrew was ready with English bribes, and the Hamiltons and the Gordons were induced to abandon a hopeless struggle and lay down their arms. Only Kirkaldy of Grange held out, hoping against hope that the promised Guisan help would reach him in Edinburgh Castle. Once a large sum of French money for him was withheld by the treachery of Sir James Balfour, corrupt almost to the point of grotesqueness; and thenceforward Kirkaldy, Lord Hume, and the rest of the party simply held out in the castle to save their lives. But when Drury with English troops crossed the Border and reinforced Morton, Kirkaldy surrendered to the English general, on promise of fair treatment. Morton insisted upon the prisoners being delivered to him, for whilst they lived, he said, there would be no safety for him or the State; and though Drury held out, Elizabeth at last gave way to Morton's importunity, and brave Kirkaldy and the rest of Mary's staunch friends lost their heads. Thenceforward Mary Stuart's cause was dead, so far as the Scottish people themselves were concerned. Morton nearly obtained the Bishop of Ross, too, from Elizabeth, but he was after all a sovereign's Ambassador, and her Council dissuaded her from surrendering him,

On his abject submission and solemn promise never again to take part in public affairs,[1] he was allowed to go to France, to break his pledge at once, and become thenceforward an untiring agent for the furtherance of Spanish aims in England. Thus Scotland for a time, under so firm an English ally as Morton, ceased to cause active anxiety to Elizabeth and her minister.

Alba, sick of his sanguinary failure, was replaced in Flanders by a more diplomatic Governor (Requesens) late in 1573. Though De Guaras in London continued humbly to imitate De Spes, and immersed himself in intrigues, such as that of the English captains who proposed to betray Flushing, the plans of those who offered to kill the Prince of Orange, to kidnap the young King of Scotland, and the like, many of these plans were merely traps set by Burghley to learn how far the Spaniards were willing to go; and they came to nothing, for of all things Philip needed peace the most. Alba and the war party in Spain were in disgrace, the commerce of the country was almost destroyed by the privateers, and friendly relations with England were once more the great object of Philip's policy. Burghley also renewed his efforts to draw the countries closer together, for reasons which will presently be stated. A great delivery of Catholics from prison was made mainly at his instance, and drew upon him remonstrances and attacks, both on the part of some of the Bishops themselves, in a guarded fashion, and more violently from the Puritans, now openly patronised by Leicester. Arising out of this, a great conspiracy was said to have been discovered against the lives of Archbishop Parker and Lord Burghley, on the part of one Undertree. The depositions of the accused, which are in the Hatfield Papers, are, as usual in such cases, full to the extent of diffuseness; but though Parker was

[1] Hatfield Papers; *in extenso* in Murdin.

much alarmed, and the affair gave Burghley an infinity of trouble, there does not appear to have been much importance really attached to it.

The key to Burghley's milder attitude towards the Catholics—apart from the disappearance of Mary Stuart's party in Scotland—was the position of affairs in France. The talk of Elizabeth's marriage with Alençon had continued uninterruptedly, drawn out with a thousand banalities as to the possibility of secret meetings between the lovers, the depth and number of pock holes on the suitor's face, his personal qualities, his religious elasticity, and the like. His brother, Charles IX., was only twenty-four, but it was known that he could not live long; the heir, Anjou, now King of Poland, was a furious and fanatical Catholic. With the knowledge of Elizabeth and her minister, all France was enveloped in a vast conspiracy, in which the Montmorencis and the "politicians" were making common cause with the Huguenots, of which combination Alençon was the figure-head. But Catharine de Medici was fully aware of the fact, and was determined to frustrate it. With Anjou for King she might still be supreme in France; whereas the rise of Alençon, under the tutelage of the Huguenots and the Queen of England, would have meant extinction for her. Several times before Charles died, Alençon and the Princes of Navarre and Condé had tried to escape to England, but Catharine held them tight, and never left them. Montgomerie was waiting for the signal, with a strong fleet in the Channel, to swoop down upon Normandy, and all the Protestants and anti-Guisans in France were under arms. The mine was to burst in April, the Princes were to be rescued forcibly from Catharine, and St. Bartholomew was to be avenged. But the Queen-mother was on the alert. Just before the day fixed she hurried away from St. Germains to

Catholic Paris, clapped Alençon and Navarre, Montmorenci, De Cossé, and all the chiefs into prison, and then crushed the Protestant armies piecemeal, for they were leaderless and far apart. When, therefore, Charles IX. died (30th May 1574), Catharine was mistress of the situation, and held France in her hand until the new King, Henry III., arrived, to take possession of the throne. With such a sovereign as this in France, led by Catharine, who had her grudge to satisfy against Elizabeth for the encouragement she had given to the Princes, it was natural that Burghley should again smile somewhat upon the Catholics, and say civil words to Spain; especially as panic-stricken rumours came—though they were untrue—that Philip was fitting out a great navy to send with a powerful force to Flanders.[1] Catholic Flanders, moreover, had mostly been brought back to Spanish allegiance by the mildness of Requesens; and Elizabeth was growing less willing to continue to provide large sums of money to uphold Orange in what now appeared to be a well-nigh desperate cause, if it had to be supported entirely from England. So when Requesens' envoys came to see her about the regulation of trade, and the exclusion of the privateers from her ports, she was all smiles; and although upon being appealed to, to allow English mercenaries to serve the Spaniards in Flanders as they served Orange, she refused, though

[1] As a matter of fact he was straining every nerve at the time to hold back his half-brother, Don John of Austria, who, with papal support, was full of all manner of grand plans for the founding of a great Christian Empire in Africa or the East, with himself as Emperor; or else for invading England from Flanders, marrying Mary Stuart, and reigning over a Catholic Great Britain. Don John and Gregory XIII. were very serious in their plans; but Philip was determined that nothing of the sort should be done with Spanish forces. He was absolutely bankrupt at the time, and had recently been obliged to repudiate the interest upon the vast sums he had borrowed. This had caused wholesale financial disaster in Italy and Flanders, and Philip's credit was at its lowest ebb.

not very firmly, she expressed her desire to [redacted] Orange to submit to the King of Spain. Once m[redacted] therefore, an unrestrained Catholic regime in Franc[redacted] inevitably drew England and Spain closer together. It was only when the Huguenots were paramount, who would not join Philip against England, or help the Catholics of Scotland, that Elizabeth and Burghley could afford to disregard the friendship of the King of Spain.

The behaviour of the young sovereign of France—no longer a king, but a besotted monk, sunk into the deepest abyss of debauchery and superstition—kept alive the discontent of the Huguenots and "politicians," who had regarded his accession with horror. Alençon and the King held rival courts in Paris, the one surrounded by reformers, the other by all that was retrograde and vicious. Cardinal Lorraine was dead, and the King's advisers were no longer statesmen, but mendicant friars and the Italian time-servers of the Queen-mother: Henry of Guise was just entering into the arena, and was already a popular idol; and all seemed to portend a renewal of French activity in favour of Mary Stuart.[1] Elizabeth therefore went out of her way to dazzle poor foolish De Guaras again. Seeing him walking in Richmond Park, she called him to her, and

[1] Mary's own hopes were high for a short time after the accession of her favourite brother-in-law. But she soon found out her mistake. Catharine's aim was not to benefit Mary Stuart, but to prevent the extinction of French influence in Scotland. Her first act after Henry III. ascended the throne was to project an embassy to Scotland, accredited, not as all previous French embassies had been, to Mary Stuart's party alone, but to both parties. Mary indignantly protested at this proposed recognition of the "usurpers," and the embassy was abandoned. La Chatre was sent to London in March 1575, to confirm the treaty of Blois (in which Elizabeth and the Huguenots were comprised), but he did not say a word in favour of the liberation of the Queen of Scots. The withdrawal soon afterwards of the Guisan La Mothe Fénélon from England, and the appointment, as Ambassador, of Castelnau, a great friend of the English alliance, quite convinced Mary that she had nothing to hope for from Henry III., who, sunk in sloth and vice, left everything to his mother.

d all her witchery upon him (March 1575). "You erstand," she said, "full well, old wine, old bread, nd old friends should be prized the most, and if only for the sake of showing these Frenchmen who are wrangling as to whether our friendship is firm or not, there is good reason to prove outwardly the kind feeling which inwardly exists."[1] She accused the poor man, quite coquettishly, of having received a token from the Queen of Scots—which he had not—but ended by quite winning him over by her prattle. Almost simultaneously with this, strict orders were given to the Warden of the Cinque Ports "to prevent the landing of the Prince of Orange, or any of his aiders or abettors in the conspiracy against the King of Spain, and also to prevent their receiving any aid, succour, or relief, in men, armour, or victuals."[2]

Considering that the revolt in Holland had been mainly kept up from England, this was indeed a complete change of policy; but more was behind it even than appeared. Many of the Catholic refugees on the Continent were spies in the service of Lord Burghley, to whom nearly all of them appealed as their only hope and protector, and one of them particularly, named Woodshaw,[3] who was deep in the confidence of La Motte, the Spanish Governor of Gravelines. The latter suggested that, as war between France and England was in the air, it would be a good plan for the English to seize Calais or Boulogne, with the aid of the Spaniards, and come to terms with Philip to prevent any aid or food reaching the French from Flanders or Artois. This was conveyed to Burghley, and soon Sir William Drury,

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

[2] 16th April 1575 (Hatfield Papers).

[3] Woodshaw's interesting letters of this period to Burghley are in Hatfield Papers. See also "Copley's Correspondence," Roxburghe Club.

Colonel Chester, and several of the officers who had come from Holland, were in close conference daily with him and the other Councillors remaining in London when the Queen went upon her summer progress. De Guaras, whilst reporting their movements, was in the dark as to their object. "During the last three days," he says, "at night or at unsuspected hours, they have taken from the Tower sixty waggons and gun carriages, which have been shipped to Dover." Guns, battery-trains, culverins, fieldpieces, and ammunition were being shipped on four of the Queen's ships at Rochester. Mariners were being pressed, commanders were leaving secretly for the coast, Burghley's son-in-law the Earl of Oxford, with Ralph Hopton and young Montmorenci, hurried off to Germany, and the Huguenot agents were closeted with Burghley almost day and night. We know now what it all meant, by a letter from the Earl of Sussex to Lord Burghley,[1] in which he deplores the projected war with Catholic France, which, he says, is only brought about by those who wish to prevent the Queen's marriage with Alençon. "It will bring her into war with all Europe, and she and the realm will smart for the pleasing of these men's humours." The cost of the war, he says, was to be defrayed equally by the King of Navarre (Henry), the German princes, and the Queen; "but he fears her Majesty in the end must pay for all, or let all fall when she hath put her foot in."

Wilkes, the Clerk of the Council, was sent with a large sum of money to young Montmorenci (Meru) in Strasbourg, and then over the Rhine to the Duke Hans Casimir, the great mercenary; and Meru was able to write to Burghley in October, "Thanks to the Queen's favour by your means, we are now on the point of succeeding. One of the finest armies that for twenty years hath issued

[1] Hatfield Papers, part ii.

from Germany, ready to march, is coming just in time to succour the King's brother."[1] All through the summer De Guaras was at fault as to the meaning of the preparations, which he thought might be a joint expedition against the Spaniards in Flanders. As we have seen, the very opposite really was the case. Some of the principal English officers, indeed, who had been with Orange were full of plots with De Guaras for poisoning the Prince, for betraying Flushing into Spanish hands, and so forth. For the moment there were certainly no smiles from Elizabeth for the Netherlanders; for Orange had taken a masterly step, such as she herself might have conceived. When he saw that English help was slackening, he boldly made approaches to France for help. So long as it was Huguenot help under her control, Elizabeth did not mind; but when it was a question of marrying Orange's daughter to Alençon or some other French prince, and obtaining French national patronage, it was quite another matter—that Elizabeth would never allow. So England and Spain grew closer and closer. Sir Henry Cobham was sent as an envoy to Philip, ostensibly on the question of the English prisoners of the Inquisition, but really to propose a friendship between the two countries, and inform the King of the Prince of Orange's intrigues with the French.[2] A Spanish flotilla on its way to the Netherlands, under Don Pedro de Valdés, was, moreover, welcomed in the English ports, and an envoy from Requesens took part, as the Queen's guest, in the memorable festivities at Kenilworth.

A renewed appeal was made to the Council by Orange in August, through Colonel Chester. He offered the island

[1] Hatfield Papers, part ii.

[2] See Philip's minute of his conversation with Cobham, October 1575 (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth), and also Lord Burghley's Diary.

of Zeeland to Elizabeth, if she would hold it, and begged permission to raise two thousand fresh men in England. The reply given by Burghley was to the effect that "if the Queen allowed such a thing, the King of Spain would have a good cause for introducing schism and fire into her country through Ireland. If Orange carried out his threat to hand over the territory to the French, the Queen would oppose it." Every day some fresh proof of friendship with Spain was given. Frobisher proposed to place his fleet at the disposal of the King of Spain, proclamations were issued forbidding all British subjects from taking service with Orange, and offers of mediation were frequent. In September 1575, Alençon managed to escape the vigilance of his brother and his mother, fled to Dreux, adopted the Huguenot cause, and headed the revolt with Henry of Navarre. This was the eventuality in which the English preparations were to have been employed. But, again, Catharine de Medici was too clever to be caught. She suddenly released Montmorenci and the rest of the "politicians" from the Bastile, attached them to the King's cause, and through them patched up a six months' truce between the two brothers (November). The terms were hard for Henry. Alençon was bribed with 100,000 livres, and the three rich duchies of Anjou, Berri, and Touraine; Hans Casimir got 300,000 crowns, and a pension of 40,000 livres; the German mercenaries were handsomely paid to go home; Condé was promised the governorship of Picardy; the Montmorencis, De Cossé, the Chatillons, and the rest of the malcontents were bought; the crown jewels of France were pawned, and the country plunged deeply in debt to pay for the famous truce.

Then Elizabeth and her advisers found themselves confronted with increased difficulties, as they usually did when the Catholics in France had a free hand. Catharine

and the King saw that France was not big enough to hold at the same time the sovereign and the heir presumptive, and cast about for means to get rid of him profitably. The best suggestion for them came from the Walloon nobles in favour of Spain. Why should not Alençon marry a daughter of the Spanish King and be made Viceroy of Spanish Flanders? The mere whisper of such an arrangement drove Elizabeth into a new course. She might hint, as she did pretty broadly many times, at the marriage of the young Prince with herself, but Alençon thought he saw more advantage elsewhere. For the next three years he was held tightly in the leading-strings of his mother and brother—no longer a Huguenot, but an ostentatiously devout Catholic, hating the King and his surroundings bitterly; jealous, vengeful, and turbulent, but looking for his future to the Catholics and the League rather than to the Queen of England, with whom he kept up just a sufficient pretence of love-making to prevent her from opposing him in Flanders. It was doubly necessary now for Elizabeth to be friendly with Spain; but she could not afford to see Orange utterly crushed, for with the Huguenots and Protestant Holland both subdued, there was no barrier between her and Catholic vengeance. The position was a perplexing one for her. Orange sent over prayers almost daily for help, or he must abandon the struggle. At one time, in December, when the Queen learned that a great deputation of Dutch Protestant nobles were on the way to offer her Holland and Zeeland in exchange for English support,[1] "she entered her chamber alone, slamming the door after her, and crying out that they were ruining her over this business. She declared loudly that she would have no

[1] Burghley, in his Diary, refers to this embassy, giving the names of the envoys. He says they based their offer of Holland, &c., to the Queen upon her descent from Philippa of Hainault and Holland, who married Edward III.

forces sent openly to Holland. She was in such grief that her ladies threatened to burst her door open if she would not admit them, as they could not bear her to be alone in such trouble."[1] But loudly as she might protest, especially in the hearing of the friends of Spain, and roughly as she might use St. Aldegonde, Paul Buiz, and the rest of the Netherlanders who prayed for aid, she took care, with Burghley's help, to look fixedly in another direction when men and arms, munitions and money, were sent over to Orange in violation of her own orders.

What Lord Burghley's action in the matter was is seen by his letters. Beale, one of the clerks of the Council, was sent over to Zeeland to report on Orange's position, and to insist upon the suppression of piracy. Burghley thus writes to Walsingham (16th April 1576): "I have perused all the letters and memorandum of Mr. Beale's concerning his voyage into Zeeland, and so well allow of the whole course therein taken by the Lords, that both with heart and hand I sign them."[2] The Flushing pirates appear to have offered some insult to the Earl of Oxford, Burghley's son-in-law, on his way to England, at which the Treasurer was extremely angry,[3] an unusual thing

[1] Gerald Talbot writes: "Her Majesty is troubled with these causes, which maketh her very melancholy, and she seemeth to be greatly out of quiet. What shall be done in these matters is at present unknown; but here are ambassadors on all sides, who labour greatly, one against the other. Her Majesty hath put upon her to deal betwixt the King of Spain and the Low Country; the King of France and his brother. Her Majesty may deal as pleaseth her, for I think they both be weary of war, especially Flanders, which, as report goeth, is utterly wanting of money, munition, &c." Hampton Court, 4th January 1576.

[2] Burghley was at the time unable to attend the Council in consequence of an attack of his old enemy the gout.

[3] A few days later Burghley had reason to be still more angry with Oxford himself, though with his reverence for rank he appears to have treated him with inexhaustible patience and forbearance. Oxford had been very extravagant and got into difficulties. During his absence abroad he had made some

with him. In the same letter he writes: "I find it hard to make a good distinction between anger and judgment for Lord Oxford's misusage, and especially when I look into the universal barbarism of the Prince's (Orange) force of Flushingers, who are only a rabble of common pirates, or worse, who make no difference whom they outrage, I mistrust any good issue of the cause, though of itself it should be favoured." He almost violently urges that Beale should ask the Prince of Orange to avenge such an insult "by hanging some of the principals." "Such an outrage cannot be condoned without five or six of such thieves being hanged. If the Prince were rid of a hundred of them it would be better for the cause. You see my anger leadeth my judgment. But I am not truly more moved hereto for particular causes than for the public."[1] The same day a very strong remonstrance from the English Council was written to Orange, saying that the piracy of the Flushing men was rendering his cause odious to all Christendom, and would ruin his enterprise.

The Netherlanders, especially Paul Buiz, who lodged

complaint to Burghley about his steward or agent, but nothing apparently of consequence. In March, Lord Burghley wrote to him in Paris, saying that his wife was pregnant; and the Earl's answer was most cordial, full of rejoicing at the news, and announcing his immediate return. The Treasurer's eldest son, Sir Thomas Cecil (he had been knighted the previous year at Kenilworth), travelled to Dover to meet his brother-in-law. All went well until they arrived in London, when Oxford declined to meet his wife or hold any communication with her. Burghley reasoned, remonstrated, and besought in vain. Oxford was sulky and intractable. His wife, he said, had been influenced by her parents against him, and he would have no more to do with her. The whole of the documents in the quarrel are in Hatfield Papers. As some indication of the state in which noblemen of the period travelled even short distances, two entries in the uncalendared household account-book at Hatfield may be quoted: "Saturday, December 1576. My Lord and Lady Oxford came from London to Theobalds; 28 servants with them." And again, "Monday, 14th January 1577. My Lord and my Lady of Oxford and 28 persons came from London."

[1] State Papers, Foreign.

with Burghley's servant, Herll, in Redcross Street, did their best to excuse the Flushingers, and begged that "these rough men be not roughly dealt with." It is evident that they looked upon Leicester and the Puritans as their champions rather than moderate Burghley, whose approaches to Spain at the time were, of course, well known. Herll writes (14th March 1576): "It is given out by those of good sort who profess the religion, that your Lordship has been the only obstacle to this Holland service, by dissuading her Majesty from the enterprise, when the Earl of Leicester and several earnest friends were furtherers thereof. They complain that these poor men who were sent to the Queen have been, contrary to promise, kept by indirect dealing so long here, to their utter undoing at home and abroad. They say that Sir F. Walsingham dealt honestly with them from the first. He said they would get nothing, and lose their time. They say these unworthy proceedings with foreign nations make the English the most hated men in the world, and to be contemned for mere abusers, as those who put on religion and piety and justice for a cloak to serve humours withal. Your Lordship's enemies, however, are compelled to say that you are more subject to evil judgment for your good service than for evil itself." When Herll spoke to Paul Buiz about Burghley's anger at the outrage on Lord Oxford, the Netherlander "struck his breast, and said your Lordship was the only man who had dealt sincerely with them, and truly favoured their cause, and yet was forced to give them hard words, according to the alterations of the time, parties, and occasion, which kind of free proceeding he preferred of all others."[1]

A few months later (August) Herll was made the means of conveying to Colonel Chester, then with Orange,

[1] State Papers, Foreign.

Lord Burghley's view of the situation. "Her Majesty," he says, "is so moved by those insolent delinges of the Prynce and his Zeelanders, as none dare move her to ani consideratyon towards theme, butt all is sett uppon revenge of their lewd acts and worse speche, and to extermynate them owt of the world, rather than endure it ani longer. And where the Prynce pretends aid owt of France, he dawnceth in a nett. If he se not that, her Majesty knows the contrary, and that herein he is greatly abused, or seeketh to abuse others, with small credit to hymselfe and less assurans to his estate when this maske is taken away."[1] The great indignation about the pirates may or may not have been sincere; but it is unquestionable that it was the fear expressed of an arrangement between Orange and the French that really caused the disquietude.[2] The remedy to be proposed to Orange by Chester was simply that he, Orange, should prevent any repetition of the piratical outrages of the Flushing men, and apologise for them, and his friends in England will move the Queen "to help him underhand; but to

[1] Hatfield Papers, part ii.

[2] How true this is may be seen by the account of an important conversation De Guaras had with Burghley on the 30th January 1576 (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth). De Guaras had prayed Burghley to prevent the Queen from accepting the offer of Orange's envoys for her to take Holland and Zeeland. The Treasurer replied that, if the offer were accepted, it would only be in the interests of Spain, and to prevent the French from obtaining a footing. The Spaniard derided such a possibility, and Burghley said that England, in pursuance of its ancient policy, would defend the rights of the House of Burgundy, but that "foreign intruders" had misgoverned the States to an extent which endangered England itself. "Foreign intruders" indeed, retorted De Guaras; "your Lordship cannot call Spaniards 'foreign intruders' in Flanders." Burghley got angry at this, and said, "You people are of such sort that wherever you set foot no grass grows, and you are hated everywhere." Hollanders, he continued, were fighting for their privileges, and would be successful in upholding them. The end of the colloquy was a renewal of the Queen's wish to mediate between Orange and Spain. The great object was to prevent the French from obtaining influence in Flanders, and here Spanish and English aims were identical.

say that her Majesty will be *forced* to do anything, maugre her will, is a great absurdity." But if Orange will open his eyes and see things as they are, "somewhat (yea, some round portion) will be voluntarily given to the assistance of the cause, and to aid both Zeeland and Holland, especially the latter, to which country the Queen and her Council are greatly inclined." Orange was a diplomatist as keen as Burghley himself, and he well knew that, as a last resource, he could always force the hands of the English Government by negotiating for aid from France. Elizabeth might swear at his envoys, make friends with his enemies the Spaniards, threaten to expend the last man and the last shilling she had to turn the French out of Flanders, if ever they entered; but she always ended in sending aid "underhand" to Orange to prevent his union with the French; unless, as happened later, the French were Huguenots disowned by their own King, and going as her humble servants.

Leicester was for ever clamouring for open help to be sent to Orange; the Puritans, who took their cue from him, were more aggressive than ever in the country;[1] but ready as the Queen might be to dally Leicester, she took care to make no serious move in the knotty question of the Netherlands without the advice of her "spirit," as she nicknamed the great Lord Treasurer.[2] In spite of his almost continual illness, she

[1] A violent attack against the hierarchy, and even against the Queen, was made in Parliament (February 1576) by Paul Wentworth, member for Tregony, a strong Puritan, who declared against the powers given to the bishops to regulate ritual without the intervention of Parliament, and complained of the rejection by the Queen of the bills against the Queen of Scots in the previous session of 1572. Wentworth was imprisoned in the Tower for a few days for his boldness. (D'Ewes' Journal.)

[2] As Sussex for once was on the side of Leicester and the Puritans, Burghley seems to have depended as an ally at this time principally upon Hatton. letter from the latter to the Treasurer (26th August 1576, Lansdowne MSS., 22) shows that Burghley was urging him to return to court from the country,

summoned him to her, wherever she might be; and at about the period when the letters just quoted were written, the Earl of Sussex writes saying that the Queen has just received intelligence from beyond the seas which she must discuss with him at once. When Burghley had seen the Queen, either on that occasion or soon after, and returned home, Sussex writes thus: "Her Majesty spoke honourably of your Lordship's deserts, and of her affection for you, and of your sound, deep judgment and counsel; using these words, 'that no prince in Europe had such a councillor as she had of him.' If your Lordship had heard her speeches, they must needs have been to your great contentment. The end of her Majesty's speeches was that she prayed your Lordship to come to Nonsuch, as soon as you conveniently might."

Burghley, indeed, was the only one of her ministers whom she treated with anything approaching respect, for he always respected himself. Walsingham, especially, was the object of her vulgar abuse. "Scurvy knave" and "rogue" were the terms she frequently applied to him; and it was apparently not at all an uncommon thing for her, in moments of impatience with him, to pluck off her high-heeled shoe and fling it in his face. Leicester she alternately petted and insulted. After a squabble he used to sulk at Wanstead for a few days, till she softened and commanded him to return, and then the comedy recommenced. Hatton and Heneage were treated in similar fashion, but with even less consideration. Only towards the Lord Treasurer, except for occasional fits of distrust caused by his enemies, the Queen usually behaved with decorum. How careful he was to avoid all cause for doubt is seen

where he was lying ill, and apparently unhappy. His recent unjust extortion of the lease of Ely Place, Holborn, from the Bishop of Ely (Cox), had rendered him very unpopular.

by his answer to Lord Shrewsbury's offer of his son as a husband for one of Burghley's daughters.[1] It will be recollected that Lord Shrewsbury had the custody of the Queen of Scots, and that Burghley had fallen into semi-disgrace shortly before, because he had visited Buxton at the same time as Mary and her keeper. The match proposed was a good one, and the Lord Treasurer—a new noble—was flattered and pleased at the offer, but declined it, mainly because his enemies had put into the Queen's head that he had gone to Buxton at the instance of the Shrewsburys, to plot in favour of Mary; "and hereof at my return to her Majesty's presence, I had very sharp reproofs . . . with plain charging of me for favouring the Queen of Scots, and that in so earnest sort, as I never looked for, knowing my integrity to her Majesty, but specially knowing how contrariously the Queen of Scots conceived of me for many things." He continues his letter with an evidently sincere protest of his loyalty and disinterestedness, and the absence in him of any personal feeling against Mary, but declares his determination to do his best, at all costs, to frustrate any attempted injury against his mistress or her realm.

Notwithstanding this small cloud, Burghley went again to Buxton in 1577. A somewhat curious letter from Leicester, who went to Buxton before him in June, shows that the Lord Treasurer's mode of life was not always prudent. Leicester says that he and his brother are

[1] A similar but more flattering offer was made in 1573 by the unfortunate Earl of Essex, who proposed that his eldest son, then only about six years old, should be betrothed to Burghley's daughter (Lansdowne MSS., 17). A few hours before he died (21st September 1576) the Earl wrote a most pathetic letter to Lord Burghley, praying him to take the same son into his household, and beseeching him to be good to him for the sake of his father, "who lived and died your true and unfeigned friend" (Hatfield Papers). It is sad to consider that the son grew up to be the enemy of his father's friend; to succeed, in his enmity of Burghley, the vile Leicester, who dishonoured his mother and deliberately ruined his father.

benefiting greatly from the water. "We observe our physician's orders diligently, and find great pleasure both in drinking and bathing in the water. I think it would be good for your Lordship, but not if you do as we hear your Lordship did last time: taking great journeys abroad ten or twelve miles a day, and using liberal diet with company dinners and suppers. We take another way, dining two or three together, having but one dish of meat at most, and taking the air afoot or on horseback moderately."[1] In July (1577) Burghley started from Theobalds for his Lincolnshire estates, and thence to Buxton. Leicester wrote to him there that the Queen was desirous of receiving a "tun of Buxton water in hogsheads;" but when in due time the water arrived, "her Majesty seemeth not to make any great account of it. And yet she more than twice or thrice commanded me earnestly to write to you for it, and . . . asked me sundry times whether I had remembered it or not: but it seems her Majesty doth mistrust it will not be of the goodness here it is there; besides, somebody told her there was some bruit of it about, as though her Majesty had had some sore leg. Such like devices made her half angry with me now for sending to you for it."[2] This hint of her sore leg was enough to make Elizabeth sacrifice a river of Buxton water if necessary. She, like her father before her, really had an issue in one of her legs, and there was no point upon which she was more sensitive.

[1] Hatfield Papers. [2] *Ibid.*

CHAPTER XII

1576–1580

WE have seen that from the accession of Henry III. of France in the autumn of 1574 it suited English policy to draw closer to Spain. An event happened, however, late in 1576 which once more changed the entire position. Requesens, the Spanish Viceroy of Flanders, had died in March 1576, before his mission of pacification was complete. It is true that Catholic Flanders and Brabant had been won back again, but Holland and Zeeland still stood out. The fierce Spanish infantry cared for no distinction between Fleming and Hollander, Catholic or Protestant, and were openly discontented at the conciliatory policy which Philip's penury rendered needful. They were unpaid, for there was no money in the treasury to pay them, and soon mutiny, pillage, and murder became the order of the day. Philip was in despair, and ordered his brother Don Juan to hurry to Flanders from Italy to pacify and withdraw the troops, and to conciliate the indignant Catholic Flemings at any cost. Don Juan scorned and hated the task—which he said a woman could do better than a soldier. He was full of a secret plan to dash over to England with the Spanish infantry from Flanders; and instead of obeying orders and going direct to his new government, he hurried to Spain for the purpose of persuading his brother to allow him to have his way.

The time thus wasted was fatal. Peace with Eng-

land was absolutely necessary for Philip, and he refused to countenance Don Juan's plans. But Orange had spies everywhere; Burghley's secretary, Herll, was in Flanders, and long before Don Juan arrived on the Flemish frontier the hopes of the murderous rabble of soldiery that the young Prince would lead them to England were well known to the Lord Treasurer and his mistress. Early in November 1576 the Spanish fury burst upon Antwerp. The Council of Regency consisted mostly of Flemish Catholic nobles, and they fought as well as they might against the blood lust of the King's soldiers. When all hope was gone, and the fairest cities of Flanders had been devastated and ruined, and their populations massacred, without distinction of age, sex, or creed, then Catholic Flanders turned against the wreckers of their homes, and shoulder to shoulder with Orange and his Protestants, stood at bay. When Don Juan arrived at Luxemburg he was informed that the States would only allow him to take up his governorship on terms to be dictated by them in union with Orange; the first condition of which was that the Spanish troops must leave the Netherlands forthwith, *and by land*, in order that they might not invade England. Don Juan was mad with fury and disappointment; but chafe as he might, he had to give way, and in the end was forced to enter Brussels only as Governor on sufferance of the States in the spring of 1577.

To England there came now to beg for aid and support, not rough Zeelanders alone, not beggars of the sea, not boorish burghers, but the very nobles who had often come before as Philip's representatives—De Croys, Montmorencis, De Granvelles, Zweveghems, and the like; Catholics of bluest blood, but ready to claim any help against the Spanish oppressor. Dr. Wilson was sent as English envoy to the States, and Sir John Smith went

to Madrid with a formal offer from Elizabeth to mediate.[1] Philip's only course was to accept any terms which left him even a nominal sovereignty of his Netherlands dominions, and this he did, rather than allow Elizabeth to pose as mediatrix between him and his subjects. But the altered position in Flanders completely changed the attitude of England towards Spain, especially when in the summer of 1577 Don Juan lost patience, broke faith with the Flemings, threw himself into the fortress of Namur, and defied the States. England's traditional alliance had not been with the crown of Spain, but with the House of Burgundy as possessor of the Netherlands; and now that Flanders and Brabant were at one with Holland and Zeeland in upholding their rights against Spain, England was naturally on their side against the foreigner, quite independently of the question of creed. There was no longer any concealment about it.[2] The Duke of Arschot's brother was at the English court in September with the acquiescence of Orange, planning an arrangement which seemed to offer a means by which all parties might be satisfied. The young Austrian Archduke Mathias, Philip's nephew, was suddenly spirited away from Vienna and installed by the Flemings

[1] Philip's reception of Smith was cold, more so even than had been his treatment of Sir Henry Cobham. Smith writes to Burghley (5th February 1577) saying that he "has had special care to make known the Queen's noble nature and the great love and obedience of her subjects; in which he has not detracted any title of honour that your Lordship is worthy of. Yea, even the Duke of Alba himself gives you the honour to be one of the most sufficient men in Christendom in all politic government." Smith's reports of the extremity of Philip's financial exhaustion caused great surprise amongst the friends of Spain in Elizabeth's court, many of whom disbelieved them. When Smith returned and begged the Queen for a reward for his services, she refused to accord him anything except to take his bills payable in twelve months for £2000 instead of a mortgage she had on his lands. (See letter 21st September 1578, Hatton to Burghley: State Papers, Domestic.)

[2] A sum of no less than 400,000 crowns was openly provided by Elizabeth for the States at the request of the Catholic Flemish nobles.

as sovereign of Flanders, with Orange as his guide and mentor. An English army under Leicester or his brother was to be raised to support him against Don Juan, who was rallying a Catholic force, crying to the Duke of Guise for help, and making a last appeal to his brother to save his honour, if not his sovereignty. The outbreak of the Protestants in Ghent, encouraged by the proximity of Orange, the capture and imprisonment of Arschot and the Catholic nobles, and the desecration of Catholic shrines (end of October), forced Philip's hands. The Archduke Mathias as a tributary sovereign, with the Catholic Flemings paramount over Orange, might have been tolerated; but if the Protestants and Orange were going to predominate, Spain must fight to the end. So with a heavy heart Philip bent to the inevitable, and sent Alexander Farnese and a Spanish army from Italy once more to reconquer the Netherlands.

The invariable excuse given by Elizabeth for her help to the States was, that it was to keep the French out of Flanders; Don Juan's appeal to the Guises being especially distasteful to her. "The present support desired of her," she declared, "is only in consideration of the extreme necessity of the States by reason of the great preparations in France and elsewhere to overrun them, and bring utter ruin upon them; and it not disagreeing with the ancient treaties between the crown of England and the House of Burgundy . . . the purpose of the States being no other than by these succours to keep themselves in due obedience to the King their sovereign, her Majesty is content to grant the aid desired."[1] The plausible reasons advanced, however, made no difference to Philip. It was only evident to him that the Queen of England was subsidising rebellion against him, and that her subjects held fortresses in his dominions as

[1] Hatfield Papers.

a pledge for the money she had advanced. He could not afford to declare war with England at the time, but he did what he could. The Irish malcontents were encouraged with the aid of Papal money; and Catholic plots, with Spanish and Guisan aid, for the rescue of Mary Stuart, the assassination of Elizabeth, and the like, kept the English court in alarm,[1] and pointed the moral for ever on the lips of Philip's many paid agents and friends in Elizabeth's counsels.

During most of the period when the arrangements with the States were being concluded in 1577, Burghley was absent from court, and it may be fairly assumed that the less cautious attitude adopted towards Spain was owing to the unchecked influence of Leicester; but with Burghley's return late in the autumn the astute balancing diplomacy of the master-hand becomes once more apparent, both in the declaration quoted above, and the letter drafted by the Treasurer taken by Wilkes, Clerk of the Council, to Madrid. In it Elizabeth prays Philip to have compassion upon his Flemish subjects and to grant their just demands, and again explains her support of them. Moderate and deferential, however, as the tone of the letter was, it did not alter prior facts, and Philip was indignant and wrathful at what he called an attempt of Elizabeth to lay down the law for him. "Send this man off," he says, "before his fortnight is up, and before he commits some impertinence which will oblige

[1] See the extraordinary Italian letter of this period from Baptista de Trento to the Queen, in which nearly the whole of her nobility (including Leicester and Sussex) are accused (Hatfield Papers), and also a letter written by Burghley to Lord Shrewsbury, after his return from Buxton, warning him to keep his eyes on Mary, who was, he said, suspected of suborning some of Shrewsbury's servants. The persecuting Bishop of London (Aylmer) also wrote at the same time to Burghley urging him to "use more severity than hath hitherto been used; or else we shall smart for it. For as sure as God liveth they look for an invasion, or else they (the Catholics) would not fall away as they do" (Strype's Aylmer).

us to burn him." Philip might well be angry, for he was impotent: he had to reconquer his own Flemings, Catholics and Protestants too, thanks to the aid they had obtained from Elizabeth. To make matters more galling, Antonio de Guaras had suddenly been arrested at dead of night, all his papers captured, his property sequestrated, and the poor man himself accused of consorting and plotting with the Queen's enemies.[1] Lord Burghley, his former friend, was daily threatening him with the rack in the Tower; and for eighteen months he was treated with calculating contumely and harshness, only at last to be released, old, broken, and penniless, and sent to Spain scornfully to die.

In January 1578, Don Juan and Farnese defeated the States troops at Gembloux, and it seemed as if once more Flanders and Brabant would fall a prey to Spanish soldiery. Elizabeth's aid had become less liberal with the return of Burghley, who had no objection at all to Spanish predominance in Catholic Flanders; his only interest there was to keep the French out.[2] But the Flemings naturally regarded the position from another point of view. What they wanted was to preserve their autonomous rights against Spain. Mathias had turned out a broken reed: he had no money, no followers, no friends, and no ability; and the really dominant man in the Government was Protestant Orange. This did not

[1] According to his own statement the case against him was divulged to Burghley by some of the Catholic Flemish nobles who were aware of his former practices; but there are many indications in his letters up to the time of his arrest, that he was a party to plots then in progress, especially one with Colonel Chester and others.

[2] An interesting minute on the subject, in Burghley's writing, is in Hatfield Papers (part ii., No. 531). Two personages were to be sent from England to bring about peace: one to the States, and the other to Don Juan. The States were to be reminded that they owed gratitude to Elizabeth for risking war with Spain on their behalf, and aiding them with £85,000; and the envoy was to point out to them the danger of their receiving French help. The French,

please the Catholic nobles, and they cast about for another prince with a greater following than Mathias, who should at once be a Catholic and yet acceptable to Orange and the Protestants. Catharine had for some time past anticipated the position, and had been busy, but secretly, pushing the claims of her son Alençon; but for her purpose it was necessary to manage warily, in order to avoid giving Philip open offence. Alençon, however, was bound by no such considerations. Nothing would have suited him better than to draw France into war with Spain. He was under arrest and strictly guarded, but he contrived, on the 14th February 1578, to escape out of a second-floor window in the Louvre. All France was in a turmoil. Huguenots and malcontents flocked to the Flemish frontier, and Catharine raced half over France to beg her errant son to return. Henry III. assured Mendoza, the new Spanish Ambassador on his way to England, that his brother was obedient, and he was sure he would do nothing against Philip in Flanders. But all the world knew that he would if he could; and that whatever he might do with a French force there would be against English as well as Spanish interests. Once more, therefore, it was necessary for Elizabeth to change her policy somewhat, and Lord Burghley resumed his favourite character of a friend to the ancient Spanish alliance.

The new Spanish Ambassador saw Elizabeth on the

they are to be told, may either turn and side with the enemy, or try to keep the country for themselves. As a last resort, the English envoy is to be authorised to offer English aid if the States will desist from dealing with the French.

Don Juan, on the other hand, is to be told that if he does not make terms with the States, the French will conquer the country, in which case the Queen will send such aid to the States as will enable them to hold their own against everybody. As usual with Burghley's minutes, there is at the end a carefully-balanced summary of possibilities, and courses to be pursued, all tending to the same end—the exclusion of the French from Flanders. The mission in question was that of June 1578, the envoys being Lord Cobham and Walsingham.

16th March 1578, and gave her all sorts of reassuring messages from Philip. He was the most clement of sovereigns. A successor to Don Juan should be appointed who should please everybody, and all would soon be settled. A few days afterwards Mendoza had a long conversation with Burghley, in the presence of other Councillors. As Philip had, said the Treasurer, practically accepted the various concessions to the Flemings recommended by the Queen; "if the terms offered were not accepted by the States, she herself would take up arms against them." This was probably too strong for Leicester and Walsingham, Puritans both, and Mendoza says they seemed to be urging something upon Burghley very forcibly, which he thought was the question of the withdrawal of the Spanish troops from Flanders; but it ended in Burghley again pointedly offering the Queen's mediation.

A few days later the Duke of Arschot's brother, the Marquis d'Havrey, Leicester's great friend, arrived in England to counteract Mendoza's efforts, and to beg that the troops that had been promised should be sent to the States. He was made much of by the English nobles and the Queen, who was now greatly influenced by Leicester, and Burghley at the moment seems to have stood almost alone in his resistance of open aid being sent to the States.[1] It did not take Mendoza many days to discover how things really lay. "I have found the Queen," he writes, "much opposed to your Majesty's interests, and most of her ministers are quite alienated from us, particularly those who are most important, as although there are seventeen Councillors . . . the bulk of the business really depends upon the Queen, Leicester, Walsingham, and Cecil, the latter of whom, although by virtue of his

[1] For a wonder, on this occasion Sussex sided with his enemy Leicester, although, as will be seen, only for a short time.

office he takes part in the resolutions, absents himself from the Council on many occasions, as he is opposed to the Queen's helping the rebels so effectively, and thus weakening her own position. He does not wish, however, to break with Leicester and Walsingham on the matter, they being very much wedded to the States and extremely self-seeking. I am assured that they are keeping the interest of the money lent to the States, besides the presents they have received out of the principal. They urge the business under the cloak of religion, which Cecil cannot well oppose."[1]

This, indeed, was one of the periods when Burghley's moderating influence was overborne by Leicester, Walsingham, and the Puritans. The Lord Treasurer still did his best—constantly ill though he was—to stem the violence of the tide, befriending the bishops who were being bitterly attacked,[2] and counselling caution in aiding the Flemings against Spain; but, as we have seen, he was somewhat in the background, and absented himself from court as much as possible. It is curious, however, to see, even under these circumstances, how he was still appealed to by all parties. He was very ill in April at Theobalds, and the Queen happened to be suffering from toothache. Of course Hatton must write to the Lord Treasurer, begging him to come to court and give his advice as to what should be done. The reply is very characteristic. Notwithstanding his own pain he would come up at once, he wrote, if by so doing he could relieve the Queen; but as the physicians advised that the tooth should be extracted, though they dared

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

[2] Grindall, Archbishop of Canterbury, had been deprived by the Queen for neglecting to suppress the "prophesying"; and Sandys, Archbishop of York, was also in disgrace; but, as Strype says, "his good friend Lord Burghley stood up for him." He certainly did so in the case of Grindall, who kept up a constant correspondence with the "good Lord Treasurer."

not tell the Queen so, all he could do would be to urge her Majesty to have it done."[1] Hatton did not care to incur the responsibility of saying so himself, and simply showed the Queen Burghley's letter. Doubtless Elizabeth took the good advice tendered; for it was only a day or two afterwards that young Gilbert Talbot, Lord Shrewsbury's son, was walking in the Tilt Yard, Whitehall, one morning, under the Queen's windows, when her maiden Majesty herself came to the casement in her night-dress, in full view of Talbot, who wrote: "My eye fell towards her, and she showed to be greatly ashamed thereof, for that she was unready and in her night-stuff; so when she saw me after dinner as she went to walk, she gave me a great fillip on the forehead, and told the Lord Chamberlain how I had seen her that morning, and how ashamed she was." Talbot, in writing this to his father (1st May 1578) ends his letter by saying that the Queen was that week to stay three or four days with Burghley at Theobalds. It is plain to see that the renewed severity against the Catholics in England, and the almost ostentatious aiding of the States against Spain, did not meet with the approval of Burghley. He was much more concerned for the moment at the large levies of French troops being collected on the Flemish frontier; and his ordinary policy would have been either to side with the Spaniards against them, or to have disarmed their figurehead Alençon (or Anjou as he was now called) by holding out hopes of his marriage with the Queen, if the earnest attempts of the English to mediate between the States and Don Juan were fruitless. But he had to reckon with Leicester and Walsingham, and the Queen's policy wavered almost daily between her two sets of counsellors.[2]

[1] Add. MSS., 15,891; 21st April 1578.

[2] To such an extent was this so, that whilst, according to Mendoza, money

To the Queen's visit to Theobalds is doubtless due the entry in Burghley's diary of 15th May, recording the despatch of Edward Stafford to inspect and report upon the French forces on the Flemish frontier. Alençon himself used every effort to convince the Queen of his desire to look to her, rather than to his brother, as his guide and support. On the 19th May he sent her a letter by one of his friends, informing her of his intention of relieving the Netherlands; "of which intention," he says, "she already knows so much that he will not tire her by explaining it further." On the 7th July he crossed the frontier, and threw himself into Mons for the purpose, as he declared, "of helping this oppressed people, and humiliating the pride of Spain;" and at the same time he sent his chamberlain to offer marriage to Elizabeth, and assure her of his complete dependence upon her. It was unwelcome news for Elizabeth, for she could never trust the French. Alençon, after all, was a Catholic, and she was uncertain whether Henry III. was not really behind his brother. Gondi, one of the leaders of Catharine's counsels, had recently come to England with a request to be allowed to see Mary Stuart;[1] Catholic

and men were constantly being sent to Flanders, and Leicester and Walsingham were planning the murder of Don Juan and the expulsion of Mendoza from England, "I can assure your Majesty that the Earl of Sussex is sincerely attached to your Majesty's interests, and Cecil also, though not so openly. But if he and Sussex are properly treated they will both be favourable, and their good disposition will be much strengthened when they see it rewarded." His suggestion was that Burghley and Sussex should be granted large pensions. It will be observed that Sussex had already broken free from Leicester.

[1] Elizabeth appears to have been very angry about Gondi's mission. "She told him," says Mendoza, "loudly in the audience chamber, that she knew very well he had come to disturb her country, and to act in favour of the worst woman in the world, whose head should have been struck off long ago. She was sure he had not come with the knowledge of his King, but only of some of those who surrounded him. Gondi replied that the Queen of Scots was a sovereign, as she was, and her own kinswoman, and it was not surprising that efforts should be made on her behalf. The Queen answered him angrily,

intrigues in Scotland had succeeded in putting an end to Morton's regency (March 1578); and on all sides there were indications that, if Elizabeth could only be dragged into open hostility to Spain, and so rendered powerless, an attempt would be made on the part of France to recover its lost influence over Scotland. Mendoza carefully fanned the flame of Elizabeth's distrust against the French; and the effect of Walsingham's absence in Flanders, whilst Leicester was away at Buxton, is noticeable at once. "The Queen," writes Mendoza (19th July), "is now turning her eyes more to your Majesty; and her ministers have begun to get friendly with me. If your Majesty wishes to retain them, I see a way of doing it."[1]

Alençon's agents in the meanwhile were not idle. One after the other came to assure her of their master's desire to marry her, and look to her alone for guidance. He had quarrelled with his brother, he said, and had no other mistress than the Queen of England. They quite convinced Sussex, apparently, for he entered warmly into their marriage plans, which gave him another chance of revenge upon Leicester. Elizabeth's desire to be amiable to Alençon's envoys at Long Melford during her progress (August) led her to insult Sussex, as Lord Steward, about the amount of plate on the sideboard. This gave an opportunity for Lord North, a creature of Leicester, to give Sussex the lie, and led to a further feud which continued for months.[2]

that she should never be free as long as she lived, even if it cost her (Elizabeth) her realm and her own liberty. The Queen-mother, she said, must surely know what Mary had attempted against her." (5th May 1578; Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.)

[1] Mendoza dilates much upon the venality of the English Council, and says, "I am told by a person in the palace, that, even in the matter of giving me audience readily, the Queen has been considerably influenced by the gloves and perfumes I gave her when I arrived."

[2] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, and also a letter from Sussex to Burghley in November, printed by Lodge, vol. ii.; also Sussex to Burghley,

But though Elizabeth was somewhat tranquillised with regard to the French King's connivance in Alençon's proceedings, she was cool about the marriage business. "If the Prince liked to come, she told De Bacqueville, he might do so; but he must not take offence if she did not like him when she saw him;" whereupon Burghley told the envoy that if he were in his place he would not bring his master over on such a message. All the charming of Alençon's attractive agents was unsuccessful in opening the Queen's money bags, and the loan of 300,000 crowns they prayed for was refused. If he wanted her aid or affection, she said, he must first obey her and retire from Flanders, and she would then consider what she should do. Pressure was put upon Alençon by his brother, by the Pope and the Catholics, on the other hand, to desist from his enterprise. Splendid Catholic alliances were proposed to him, and dire threats of punishment held out if he did not retire. When the Protestant Hollanders discovered that Alençon could count neither upon England nor France to support him, they began to cry off. The only temptation they had in welcoming a Catholic prince was the hope of national aid. If he did not bring that, he was as useless to them as poor Mathias had been. And so all through the autumn of 1578 the fate of Flanders hung on Elizabeth's caprice. Henry III. was anxious to get his brother married to Elizabeth, and a fresh national alliance concluded; but he wished to avoid pledging himself against Spain, so as to be able to hold the balance. Elizabeth's aim was similar, and she would promise nothing; but she swore both to Flemings and Spaniards that for every Frenchman that set foot in Flanders there should be an Englishman. Fresh German

Hatfield Papers, part ii., where he mentions that "Burghley also had been ill-used by lewd speech. I will on all occasions stick as near to you as your shirt is to your back." (5th November 1578.)

mercenaries were raised at her expense to aid the States; renewed attempts, backed by threats, were made to persuade Don Juan to ratify the pacification of Ghent; but Alençon, in the meanwhile, with a dwindling force and no money, was falling to the ground between the two stools of France and England, Huguenot or Catholic. At the end of the year ominous news came that the Huguenots had been won over by the Queen-mother;[1] that the King of France had entered into a great Catholic league against Elizabeth, and was raising a force of mercenaries in Germany to help Alençon to keep a footing in Flanders, in spite of England; whilst a Scottish nobleman, a Douglas, was at the French court carrying on some secret intrigue with Henry III.

Elizabeth was alarmed at this, and at once became warm in the Alençon marriage, thanks partly also to the arrival of the Prince's agent Simier, who very soon established a complete influence over the Queen, to the infinite scandal of all Europe. Against this influence Mendoza, able, bold, and crafty, battled ceaselessly: for ever pointing at the intrigues of the French in Scotland, their old jealousy of England, the approaching marriageable age of the King of Scots, which would give an opportunity for recovering French influence in his country, and much more to the same effect. After one conversation of this sort with the Queen, late in January 1579, Mendoza drove his points home one by one to Burghley and Sussex, showing them how much more profitable was an alliance with Spain than with France, and the danger of England herself being attacked if she took the Netherlands rebels under her protection. Amongst other things Burghley replied that "he had told M. Simier that one of the principal arguments in favour of the marriage,

[1] This was true. The treaty of Nerac was signed in February 1579 by Henry of Navarre, now the acknowledged leader.

namely, that Alençon might become King of France, had turned him (Cecil) against it, as he considered that it would be a disadvantage to England, whereupon Simier had complained of him to the Queen. For his own part his desire had always been to see the Queen married to a prince of the House of Austria, with which it was well to be in alliance; but since old friends cast them off, and your Majesty refused to confirm the treaties, or receive a minister at your court,[1] they must seek new friends."

The current of affairs and the Queen's fickleness evidently displeased the Lord Treasurer. In September (1578) he had unsuccessfully begged leave of absence to visit Burghley,[2] where the rebuilding of the mansion was still progressing, under the care of Sir Thomas Cecil. He was not allowed to go; but the plague raged in London all the autumn, and Burghley retreated to Theobalds, where he was within easy reach of the Council. He found, moreover, Leicester's enmity towards him more active than ever,[3] and Hatton, now his chief henchman, for Sussex was unstable, was of inferior rank, influence, and ability. But though his political influence for a time was under a cloud, there was no abatement of the appeals to his judgment and for his intercession with the Queen. Imprisoned Catholics, deprived Puritans, old friends, like the Duchess of Suffolk, Lord Lincoln, or the Earl of Bedford, claimed his advice in their affairs; suitors at law besought his good word; miners or explorers prayed for his patronage; bishops bespoke his aid to govern their clergy; the clergy appealed to him against the bishops. High and humble, friend and stranger,

[1] Cobham, Wilkes, and Smith had all been sent back with a short answer.

[2] Sir Thomas Cecil to Burghley, and Lord Lincoln to the same (Hatfield Papers).

[3] Hatton to Burghley, 28th September 1578 (Hatfield Papers).

rich and poor alike, looked to Burghley for guidance, and found at least patient consideration for their causes.[1]

By the beginning of 1579, however, the aspect of European politics had become so threatening that the practised hand of the Lord Treasurer was needed at the helm, and thenceforward his influence was again in the ascendant. Simier was making violent vicarious love to the Queen, and letters of the most extravagant description were exchanged between the young Prince and Elizabeth, whilst really sincere and earnest efforts were being made in favour of the match by Henry III. and Catharine de Medici. Commissioners and ambassadors went backwards and forwards, and the conditions, not only of the Queen's marriage, but of a national offensive and defensive alliance between France and England, were under discussion. Henry III. was ready, he said, to submit to any conditions desired by Elizabeth, and Alençon was almost blasphemous in his praising of the charms of his elderly flame. There were two main reasons for this drawing together of England and France. Don Juan was dead, and the military genius and diplomacy of Alexander Farnese had once more separated Catholic Belgium from Protestant Holland (Treaty of Arras, January 1579). Orange himself still clung to the hope of consolidating a united Flemish nation, including north and south, and desired to use Alençon, with the Queen of England's support, for that purpose but there was no enthusiasm in Holland for the idea; and in the meanwhile Alençon was isolated in Catholic Flanders, with his own brother raging at the compromising position in which he placed him, and ordering him to return to France. It was evident to Henry that the only way in which his turbulent brother

[1] There are many hundreds of such letters as these at Hatfield and in the Lansdowne MSS.

could be established in Flanders, without causing both Spanish and English arms to be used against him, was to let him depend solely upon Elizabeth and Orange, whilst France stood aloof. This was one of the reasons for the closer relations desired by Catharine and her son. The other was more important still. The young King of Portugal had fallen in battle in Morocco, and the new King was an aged, childless Cardinal. Philip of Spain was already intriguing for the succession, which he claimed. The possession of the fine harbours and Atlantic seaboard of Portugal by Spain would enormously increase her maritime potency, to the detriment of England and France; and it was felt that these powers must unite to resist the common danger. That Lord Burghley was early alive to its importance is proved by a genealogical statement of his relating to the Portuguese succession immediately after the death of the King Don Sebastian[1] (August 1578), and several memoranda of subsequent date on the subject.

Under these circumstances the Alençon approaches again became to all appearance serious. The Prince, ceding to the pressure placed upon him, consented to retire from Flanders early in the year, and was reconciled to his brother; and then the arrangements for effective action in the Netherlands and a visit of Alençon to England were actively proceeded with. How busy Lord Burghley was in the matter will be seen by the very voluminous minutes in his own hand of the discussions in Council on the subject (Hatfield Papers). In all probability the Queen was not even now sincere in the matter of the marriage, especially as Leicester and Hatton pretended to be warmly in favour of it, until they became personally jealous of Simier; but Burghley was evidently doubtful. In his balancing papers he gives much more

[1] Hatfield State Papers, part ii.

space to the "perils" than to the advantages of the match, and his own final judgment is, that "except that her Majesty would of her own mind incline to marriage he would never advise thereto." In the meanwhile, all England was in a veritable panic at the idea of the marriage of the Queen to a Papist. Puritan pulpits rang with denunciations; Stubbs' famous book, "The Discovery of a Gaping Gulph," which cost the author his right hand and deeply offended the Queen, was read widely; and the Queen herself was obliged to warn her eager suitor of the hatred of her people to the idea of his proposed visit. But the preparations went on, and the court was ordered to make itself as fine as money would make it, Leicester alone sending to Flanders for twelve hundred pounds' worth of silks, velvets, and cloth of gold. Simier in the meanwhile was daily becoming more clamorous for a definite answer to his master's proposal. Large bribes were paid by the French Ambassador and Mendoza respectively to the Councillors to forward or impede the match, and the probabilities shifted from day to day.[1]

When the Queen seemed really bent upon the match, Burghley did not attempt to oppose her; he simply placed before her the arguments for and against it, and left the decision to her. This is exactly what Elizabeth did not wish. Simier and her own imprudence had drawn her into an extremely dangerous position, and she wished her Council to assume the responsibility of extricating her

[1] Mendoza, writing on 8th April, says, "Lord Burghley is not so much opposed to the match as formerly; but I cannot discover whether he and Sussex have changed their minds because they think that they may thus bring about the fall of Leicester, and avenge themselves upon him for old grievances, and for his having advanced to the office of Chancellor an enemy of theirs" (*i.e.* Bromley). On another occasion, when the Queen learned of the Papal-Spanish expedition to Ireland to aid the Desmonds in Munster, she was so much alarmed that she dropped the French negotiations for some days and refused to see Simier.

from it. Her first object in resuming the negotiations had been to get Alençon and the French out of Flanders, whilst preventing the despair and collapse of Orange; her present aim was to secure the King of France to her side, and weaken Spain without herself being drawn into open hostility. The talk of marriage helped her in this; but if once she fell into the trap, and was married indeed, her power of balance would be gone. Driven into a corner, late in April she took Simier and the French Ambassador, with Burghley, Leicester, Sussex, and Walsingham, to Wanstead, where she desired the Councillors to give her in writing their individual opinions, in order that she might show them to the Frenchmen. They refused to do so, and once more laid before her the "perils and advantages" of each course, leaving her to decide. The Councillors mentioned sat in conference almost day and night during their three days' stay at Wanstead, but, after all, returned as they came. Simier was furious, and threatened to go back to France; and a full Council sat at Whitehall on the 3rd May, from two o'clock in the day till two the next morning, finally to discuss the question. It was found that the only man really in favour of the marriage was Sussex, and Simier was called in and informed that his master's conditions were unacceptable. The envoy roared out that he had been played with, and flung out of the room to make his complaint to the Queen. She was all sympathy. She wanted to get married—she must get married. It was all the fault of her Councillors, and so forth, until her ruffled "ape," as she called him, was pacified. Alençon was not lightly put off. He announced his intention of coming to see his goddess, no matter what the consequences might be. The Queen was for refusing him leave, but Lord Burghley pointed out to her the danger of this open affront to a French prince. She had gone too far to refuse, and she was

obliged to give a passport. Simier rarely left the Queen's side now, and she seems quite to have lost her head. Mendoza worked hard to spread the sinister murmurs of her behaviour through the country. Leicester grew violently jealous, and twice hired an assassin to kill Simier, which he nearly did once in the Queen's own barge. The Queen was beside herself with rage, and Simier, to revenge himself upon Leicester, told the Queen, as no one else had dared to do, of the marriage of Leicester with Lady Essex. It was a master-stroke. The Queen's fury was boundless, and she swore like a trooper at Leicester and the she-wolf he had married. For a time Leicester's influence was gone, and Simier lived in the palace of Greenwich, to the open disgust of the English people. In August, Alençon rushed over to England in disguise. His coming was an open secret, but the Queen kept him hid in the palace of Greenwich.[1] She posed before him, showed off all her charms, dined and supped with him in private, fell desperately in love with him, or pretended to do so, and sent him off after a week's stay as secretly as he came, with expressions of affection on both sides, even too fervid to be sincere, and long afterwards continued by correspondence.

Whatever might be the final result of the marriage negotiations—and Burghley himself was as much in the dark as any one on that point—a close alliance between France and England was of growing importance to both countries. The English Council under Burghley sat at Greenwich almost continuously from the 2nd to the 8th October discussing, weighing, and reporting upon the whole question of alliance and marriage. The final result

[1] It has not been noticed by Burghley's biographers that, true to his cautious character, he found an excuse for going into Northamptonshire shortly before Alençon arrived in London. He writes an interesting letter to Hatton from Althorpe, dated 9th August (Nicholas's "Life of Hatton"), in reply to the advices respecting the fortifying of the Papal force at Dingle, in Kerry. The

was that the marriage would be undesirable, Burghley and Sussex being the only Councillors who were not strongly opposed to it.[1] The message to the Queen was delivered by Burghley. It was ambiguous and moderate, begged the Queen to tell the Council her own mind, and so on; but there was no doubt of the meaning of it to the Queen. The Council was against the match, unless some guarantee could be found that the Protestant religion should not be imperilled. Burghley's minute sets forth the Queen's answer. "She shed many tears to find that her Councillors, by their long disputations, should make it doubtful whether it would be safe for her to marry and have a child." She was a simpleton, she said, to have referred the question to them. She expected they would have unanimously begged her to marry, instead of raising doubts about it. When they saw her again later in the day she was more angry still. She railed at those who would think of "surety" before her happiness, "and that any should think so slenderly of her" as to doubt that she would take care that religion was properly safeguarded if she married. She managed, as usual, to reduce the Council to a state of confusion with her tears and reproaches; and a hasty meeting was called, at which a resolution was passed to the effect, that

ships must be sent against them, he says, double-manned, "as there is no good access by land." He is very jealous of foreigners setting foot in Ireland, for fear any "discontentation grow betwixt France and us upon a breach of this interview (*i.e.* with Alençon), or if the King of Spain shall be free from his troubles in the Low Country." He approves of the agreement of Cologne and the pacification of Ghent, whereby Holland and Zeeland were to remain Protestant, and Flanders Catholic, rather than the war should go on. "On Tuesday morning we will be at Northampton, where after noon we mean to hear the babbling matters of the town for the causes of religion, wishing that we may accord them all in mind and action; at least we will draw them to follow one line by the rule of the laws, or else make the contrariant feel the sharpness of the same law." On the same day Burghley wrote a vigorous letter to Walsingham directing energetic action in Ireland.

[1] Burghley's minutes of the deliberations are in Hatfield Papers, part ii.

as the Queen seemed so much bent upon the marriage, the Councillors all offered their services to promote it. When this message was taken to her, Lord Burghley records that "her Majesty's answers were very sharp in reprehending all such as she thought would make arguments against her marriage, and though she thought it not meet to declare to them whether she would marry with Monsieur or no, yet she looked from their hands that they should with one accord have made a special suit to her for the same."[1]

No wonder that with such a change on the part of the Queen from morning to afternoon, the Councillors were at their wits' end to know what she really meant; but it is evident that she intended to have her own way, whatever it was, and lay the responsibility upon others. Burghley and Sussex had avoided open opposition, and were favourably regarded by the Queen in consequence; whilst Leicester, Walsingham, Knollys, and even her poor "sheep" Hatton, came in for a share of her vituperation and abuse; and the Puritans who were leading the outcry against the match received harder measure than ever.

Early in November she summoned the Council again, and told them that she had decided to marry. It was only for them now to consider the means. Let them, she said, individually put their opinions in writing. It was evident that this course would again bring forward the dissensions on the subject, and render it more difficult, which was perhaps her intention. Simier went and told her so, whereupon she asked him angrily how he knew what orders she had given to her Council. He replied that Lord Burghley had told him. "Surely," she cried, "it is possible for my Councillors to keep a secret. I will see to this." Then she sent orders to the Council to

[1] Hatfield Papers, part ii.

write a letter to Alençon, asking him to come to England quickly, which they refused to do. He was, they said, coming to marry her, not them, and she ought to write herself. They openly quarrelled with Simier, who was finding England too hot for him, and who left late in November, taking with him a hastily patched draft agreement for the marriage, in which the Queen characteristically introduced at the last hour an additional loophole of escape, by stipulating that the articles should remain in suspense for two months, "during which time the Queen hopes to have brought her people to consent. If before that time she did not write consenting to receive ambassadors for the conclusion of the treaty, the whole of the conditions would be void."[1]

The year 1580 opened full of anxiety for Elizabeth. The ostentatious fitting out of the Spanish fleet, and the active support by Spain and the Pope of the Desmond rebellion, the success of Parma, and the desperate attempts of Orange to reunite Flanders with Holland under Alençon in the national cause, were all so many dangers to England. If Elizabeth offended France or alienated Alençon himself, Flemish affairs might be settled without her participation, and to her detriment, and she would have to face Spain alone. This was the more to be feared, as religious affairs in England were in a worse condition than before, and for the first time since her accession the Queen herself was unpopular. Her light conduct with Simier, and, above all, her seeming determination in favour of the Alençon marriage, had aroused all the old hatred against the French, and had embittered the widespread Puritan distrust of the "Papists." The

[1] The original draft of the protocol in Simier's handwriting is in the Hatfield Papers. A most valuable digest or "time-table," in Burghley's handwriting, of the whole of the negotiations for the Queen's marriage up to the period of Simier's departure, will be found in the Hatfield Papers, part ii.

country was being flooded with seminary priests, specially trained for the propaganda to which they devoted their lives,[1] and the great Catholic party in England, having recovered somewhat from the blow of the Norfolk conspiracy, were once more holding up their heads. Elizabeth had allowed Leicester and her own passions to lead her too far, and she struggled to free herself from the toils. When she tried in January to withdraw gently from the Alençon negotiations, and suggested to Henry III. that some fresh conditions were necessary, she found it difficult. The King was determined to throw the responsibility of breaking upon her, and it still suited him to keep up an appearance of friendship. She could, he replied, make her own stipulations; he would accept them. As for religion, that was his brother's affair. Alençon himself also said that he would come over at once to England and leave everything to her. He hoped she was not reviving the religious question for the purpose of deceiving him again, as some people said; but he would risk everything for his love. He went so far as to beg her to forgive Leicester for his sake, and blamed Simier for quarrelling with the Earl.

But Leicester, Hatton, and Walsingham were quite determined now to stop the marriage, which looked too serious to please them; and a cloud of questions about religion, rank of ambassadors, &c., soon threw the matter into obscurity again. How completely affairs had changed in this respect in a few weeks is seen in the long draft of a letter to the Queen at Hatfield, dated at end of January 1580, in the handwriting of Sir Thomas Cecil, although it can hardly have been really written by him to the Queen, but certainly represents the views of his

[1] Allen's famous English seminary had been transferred to Rheims under the patronage of the Guises, and a great number of young priests were continually sent into England, especially after 1579, the first members of the Jesuit mission, Persons and Campion, arriving in 1580.

father. Burghley had struggled during all his ministry, and often against great difficulties, to preserve peace with Spain, whilst holding high England's honour and prosperity; but now that Leicester and the extreme Protestant party, together with Philip's seizure of Portugal, had forced the Queen into a position which sooner or later must end in hostility to Spain, and perhaps with France also, Burghley urged the need for a close understanding with France, on the safest terms possible for his country.

The course now taken by the Queen seemed to render inevitable that which Burghley had all his life endeavoured to avoid, namely, the isolation of England with both of the great powers against her. The address above referred to lays down that, so long as the Queen was favourable to the Alençon marriage, the writer was willing to sacrifice his life for it. He still maintains that it is the only safe course, and one which should enable the Queen to "rule the sternes of the shippes of Europe with more fame than ever came to any Quene of the Worelld." But finding her Majesty utterly against it, he proposes such remedies as are necessary, at least for comparative safety. He points out that she cannot expect that France and Alençon will sit down patiently under the slight, though they may dissemble for a time; and he suggests that Alençon should be diverted from allying himself with Spain, by encouraging his enterprise in the Netherlands, dangerous though such a course was to England. All Papists should be dismissed from positions of trust; the army, navy, and fortifications should be placed on a war-footing; mercenary Germans should be bespoken; fresh vents for English commerce should be sought;[1] the Irish should be conciliated, and

[1] Mendoza at this period writes to the King of the enormous number of ships being built. "This," he says, "makes the English almost masters of

their just grievances remedied, and "certain private disorders in Ireland winked at." The Queen of Scots should be brought to a safer place farther south, and repressive precautions taken against her friends in England. Whoever may have given this remarkable state paper to Elizabeth,[1] it is certain that the advice contained in it was followed. Orders were given to bring Mary Stuart to Ashby-de-la-Zouch,[2] the mild and lenient Lord Shrewsbury being reinforced in his guard by Sir Ralph Sadler and two other known Protestants;[3] a general muster of militia was summoned, 90,000 men in all; London was called upon for 4000 armed men; the Queen's navy, seventeen ships, was mobilised;[4] and negotiations were opened for Condé and a Huguenot force, with a number of mercenary German Protestants, to enter Flanders.[5] It was considered rightly that if a

the commerce . . . as they have a monopoly of shipping, whereby they profit by all the freights." Burghley was an untiring promoter of extension of legitimate trade, as he was a constant enemy to piracy. He was at this time promoting Humphrey Gilbert's colonisation schemes in North America, the enterprises of Frobisher and his friends in Hudson's Bay, the trade of the Muscovy Company, the overland route to the Caspian by the White Sea and the Volga, and other similar adventures; but, as we shall have occasion to see later, he disapproved entirely of Drake's proceedings in the Pacific, and other expeditions of a wantonly aggressive character.

[1] Hatfield Papers, part ii.

[2] Sadler State Papers.

[3] The intention, however, was not carried out. In the summer Lord Shrewsbury wrote to Lady Burghley asking her to prevail upon her husband to obtain the Queen's permission for Mary Stuart to go to Buxton and Chatsworth. Lady Burghley in her reply suggests that the Queen was angry and refused. Mary, however, did go to Buxton later, but not to Chatsworth.

[4] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth. Burghley's interest in naval affairs was great. He had, when danger threatened from Alba, in the summer of 1578, elaborated a scheme for the mobilisation of the navy, and had put fourteen ships into commission. The Council appear to have addressed to him most of their minutes respecting naval organisation, instead of to the Lord Admiral.

[5] The Duke Hans Casimir was in England at the time (January 1580), and took a large sum of money back with him for the purpose in question.

large body of Huguenots depending entirely upon England were by Alençon's side, it would not only prevent his brother from supporting him, but would render his enterprise in Flanders less dangerous to England.

Concurrently with these precautions, the Queen renewed her extravagant love correspondence with Alençon. There is no more remarkable instance than this of the consummate statesmanship of Burghley. The country had been driven out of the straight course in which he had held it so long, and was rapidly nearing the breakers. The document now under consideration laid before the Queen the only course which could avert destruction, and this course, as we see, she wisely took. If Burghley had openly opposed Leicester and Walsingham from the first, he would probably have fallen into disgrace, and have lost his influence entirely; but by holding aloof and tempering their policy only, he was able, when catastrophe impended, to lead the ship of state into a harbour of comparative safety. Under the influence of fear and Burghley, the Queen at the same time became most amiable to the Spaniards again. She assured Mendoza (20th February) that "she would never make war upon your Majesty, unless you began it first, which she could not believe by any means you would do." She was, she said, a sister to Philip. "She had always done her best for the tranquillity of the Netherlands, and to prevent the French from getting a footing there." Mendoza spoke some hard truths to her, but she was very humble.

A few days afterwards, when the French Ambassador had been driving her into a corner about Alençon, and threatening that the Prince would publish her letters, she was closeted in her chamber at Whitehall with Burghley and Archbishop Sandys. "Here am I," she cried, "between Scylla and Charybdis. Alençon has agreed to all my conditions, and wants to know when

he is to come and marry me. If I fail he will probably quarrel with me, and if I marry him I shall not be able to govern the country. What shall I do?" Sandys gave a courtier-like reply, and Burghley was silent. The Queen was impatient at this, and roughly told him he was purposely absenting himself from the Council. What was his advice? Thus pressed, the Lord Treasurer replied that if it was her pleasure to marry she should do so, as Alençon had accepted the terms which rendered her safe. "That," said the Queen, "is not the opinion of the rest of the Council, but that I should keep him in play." Burghley was aware of this already, and dryly told the Queen that those who tried to trick princes generally ended by being caught themselves. But Elizabeth knew her profound powers of dissimulation better even than Burghley did, and went on her way. The Lord Treasurer stood almost alone among the councillors in his mild and cautious policy. Sussex, in deep dudgeon, was generally at his mansion at Newhall; and, as we have seen, Burghley himself avoided as much as possible incurring responsibility for the present action of the Queen, except so far as to advise her how to render her policy as little harmful as possible. But it is evident that Elizabeth, in moments of difficulty like this, always turned away from Leicester, and sought the sounder aid of the Lord Treasurer.

Leicester, in March, pretended to fall ill, and during his absence from court completely turned round. Now that Lord Burghley was urging for a close friendship with France, since Leicester's policy had alienated Spain, the Earl, with characteristic instability, suddenly professed to Mendoza a desire to "serve the King of Spain." His enemies, he said, were plotting this French alliance and marriage only to spite him, and he would bring the Queen to a close friendship to Spain. The Queen was,

doubtless, aware of Leicester's change; because when Castelnau, the French Ambassador, addressed Elizabeth with an important message from Catharine, proposing that a joint effort should be made to prevent the domination of Portugal by Philip (17th April 1580), he was referred to Burghley alone, and only after the decision had been adopted not to commence hostilities, as suggested, was Leicester let into the secret. Dangerous as it was to England that Philip should dominate Portugal, it was of more importance to France; and it was determined to cast upon the latter power, if possible, the responsibility of preventing it.

The prospect of a serious cause for dissension between France and Spain was, indeed, a welcome one for Elizabeth, and she made the most of it. The star of Morton in Scotland was waning fast, and D'Aubigny, Earl of Lennox, had already gained a complete command of the young King's affection. Mary Stuart from her captivity was taking the grave step of laying herself, her country, and her child at the feet of the King of Spain, with the acquiescence this time of the Duke of Guise. The English Government, however, was not yet aware of this, and looked upon France as more likely than Spain to influence Scotland under D'Aubigny.[1] Division in France was consequently promoted by Leicester and his party. Alençon was warned not to be too pliant in agreeing

[1] This was actually the case at the time so far as Scotland itself as apart from Mary was concerned. There is in the Hatfield Papers of this date (1580) a fervent appeal from James VI. to the King of France, begging for assistance in force to release his mother, and support him against his heretic subjects. Mendoza also reports (4th September 1580) that Guise had just recognised James's title of King for the first time, and that intimate relations were being formed between the courts of Scotland and France. This probably arose from the long delay of the reply from Spain to Mary, Guise, and the Archbishop of Glasgow, relative to their offer of complete submission to Philip. The whole matter, however, was changed in the following year, and thenceforward Mary and her friends depended upon Spain alone.

with his brother; and when Condé and Navarre once again raised the Huguenot standard, the former rushed over to England to beseech for funds (June 1580), and was received several times in secret by the Queen and Leicester. He immediately sent a message to his adherents in France that all was well, and that assistance would be given to him.

After some days the Queen sent word to Castelnau, the French Ambassador, saying that she had heard that Condé was in England, but she would not receive him except in the Ambassador's presence. Burghley, writing to Sussex, says that on arriving at Nonsuch from Theobalds, "I came hither about five o'clock, and repairing towards the Privy Chamber to see her Majesty, I found the door at the upper end shut, and understood that the French Ambassador and the Prince of Condé had been a long time there with her Majesty, with none others of the Council but my Lord of Leicester and Mr. Vice-Chamberlain Hatton." After the audience Castelnau went to Burghley and complained of Condé for raising disturbances in France. "He augmenteth his suspicions upon the sight of the great favours shown to the Prince of Condé by certain Councillors here, whom he understandeth have been many times with him (Condé) at the banqueting-house where he is lodged." The Queen told Burghley that Condé had asked for a contribution of one-third of the cost of a Huguenot rising, the King of Navarre and the German Protestants paying the other two-thirds; but the Lord Treasurer's opinion of it is sufficiently expressed in the following words, which probably decided the question, for Condé did not get the aid he sought notwithstanding Leicester's efforts: "I wish her Majesty may spend some portion to solicit them for peace . . . but to enter into war and therewith to break the marriage, and so to be left alone as subject

to the burden of such a war, I think no good counsellor can allow."[1]

The fact that he had not been personally consulted earlier did not apparently ruffle Lord Burghley. In his quiet, prudent way he brought things round to his view, without caring for the personal aspect. Not so, irritable, hot-tempered Sussex. He replied in boiling indignation against Leicester—"I have never heard word from my Lord Leicester, Mr. Vice-Chamberlain, or Mr. Secretary Walsingham, of the coming of the Prince of Condé, or of his expectations, or to seek to know what I thought fit to do in his cause; whereby I see either they seek to keep the whole from me, or else care little for my opinion . . . perhaps at my coming some of them will mislike I am made such a stranger . . . I can give as good a sound opinion as the best of them . . . I am very loath to see my sovereign lady to be violently drawn into war."[2] In any case, Burghley's unaided efforts were sufficient to prevent the Queen from giving money to Condé, and thus setting the King of France against her as well as the King of Spain. She was, indeed, in a month, so completely turned by Lord Burghley's influence as to exert herself to bring about some sort of accord between Henry III. and the Huguenots.[3]

[1] In Strype's "Annals," *in extenso.*

[2] Hatfield Papers. Another letter of this period (June 1580) from Sussex to Lord Burghley (Hatfield Papers) shows forcibly the affection and veneration he felt for him. "I do love, honour, and reverence you as a father, and do you all the service we can as far as any child you have, with heart and hand. . . . The true fear of God which your actions have always shown to be in your heart, the great and deep care you have had for the honour and safety of the Queen . . . and the continual trouble you have of long time taken for the benefit of the commonwealth, and the upright course you have always taken respecting the matter, and not the person, in all causes . . . have tied me to your Lordship in that knot which no worldly frailty can break."

[3] See her letter to Henry III. (Hatfield State Papers, 27th July 1580).

During the rest of the year the haggling between Elizabeth and Alençon went on. The deputies of the States, after much discussion, offered the sovereignty to the French Prince, whose letters to the Queen grew more preposterous than ever. It was evident that if he went too far in the Protestant direction to please Elizabeth he would be useless as a means for attracting the Catholic Flemings to cordial union with Orange; whereas an uncompromising Catholic attitude, or any appearance of depending upon his brother for armed aid, would have been fiercely resisted both by the English and the Hollanders. Many points therefore had to be reconciled, and the Queen kept the affair mainly in her own hands, playing upon the hopes, fears, and ambitions of Alençon with the dexterity of a juggler.

Burghley's main efforts in the meanwhile were directed to preventing her from drifting into war, either with France or Spain. When the envoys came from the Portuguese pretender, Don Antonio, they brought bribes and presents in plenty for Leicester, who entertained them splendidly, and urged their suit for assistance for their master; but again Lord Burghley pointed out to the Queen the expense she would incur and the risks she would run in a war with Spain, and one Ambassador after another went back discomfited, whilst Leicester pocketed their bribes, and alternately raged and sulked when his advice was not followed.

There were others besides Leicester whose recklessness or greed was dragging England to the brink of a war with Spain, in spite of Burghley's efforts. Strong as was the great statesman's interest in increasing the legitimate trade of the country, we have seen that from the beginning of Hawkins' voyages to the West Coast of Africa, and thence to South America with slaves,

Burghley had refused any participation in the syndicates that financed them. He had, it is true, on more than one occasion repudiated the claim of the Spaniards, and especially of the Portuguese, to exclusive dominion of the western world by virtue of the Pope's bull, but he had always frowned upon the filibustering attempts of the syndicates, under the auspices of some of the aldermen of London, to establish posts in territory occupied by other Christian powers, or to force trade upon established settlements against the will of the authorities. He had honestly done his best to check robbery in the Channel by those who called themselves privateers, and almost alone of the Councillors, he had no share or interest in the piratical ventures under the English flag which had committed such destructive depredations upon shipping.

The attack upon Hawkins' fleet at San Juan de Ulloa, 1568, had aroused fierce and not unnatural indignation amongst sailors and merchants in England; but the expedition was in defiance of the Spanish law, in a port belonging to and occupied by Spain, and it is more than doubtful whether Burghley advised the seizure of the specie belonging to Philip, in December 1568, in reprisal for the attack. There were ample reasons, and an excellent legal pretext, for the seizure of the money without that. In fact it was a master-stroke of policy which the foolish rashness of De Spes had put into Burghley's power, and the latter and Elizabeth naturally welcomed the opportunity of crippling Alba. But when it became a question of revenging San Juan de Ulloa by the despatch of a strong armed expedition against Spanish colonies, Lord Burghley looked askance at what might well be made a *casus belli* by Spain, and could only enrich the mariners and shareholders who took part in it.

Drake's raid upon Nombre-de-Dios, 1573, had been robbery pure and simple, carried out swiftly and secretly, so that the authorities at home had no opportunity, even if they had the will, to prevent it; and Drake kept out of the way for nearly three years afterwards, to escape punishment. But in 1577 he was introduced by Walsingham or Hatton to the Queen,[1] who told him that she wished to be revenged upon the King of Spain, and that he, Drake, was the man to do it. When Drake explained his plan for a great piratical raid into the Pacific, the Queen swore by her crown that she would have any man's head who informed the King of Spain of it; and, says Drake, "her Majesty gave me special commandment that of all men my Lord Treasurer should not know it." But the preparations for the voyage could not be kept secret entirely from Burghley, who was well served by spies, and had many means of winning men. He could not prohibit the expedition, of course; but, as usual, he sought to render it as innocuous as possible. Thomas Doughty, presumably a barrister, certainly a man of questionable character, had become Hatton's secretary, and was deep with Drake in the plans for the expedition. The whole business is somewhat obscure, but Lord Burghley appears to have bought this man to his interests, and, according to Doughty himself, to have offered him the post of his private secretary, which, however, is unlikely. In any case, he learned from him all that there was to know about Drake's intentions, and when, in November 1577, Drake's expedition sailed, Doughty accompanied it as Burghley's secret agent, and,

[1] According to Drake's statement given in Cooke's narrative in Vaux, Drake was presented to the Queen by Walsingham; but Doughty, of whom we shall speak presently, asserted when he was on his trial that he, who was a great friend of Drake, and private secretary to Hatton, had interested the latter in the project, and that it was he who persuaded the Queen to countenance Drake.

it may charitably be surmised, for the express purpose of moderating if not frustrating its action. First he tried to desert with his ship, and was duly chased and brought back by Drake. Then he was accused of attempting to sow discord, discouragement, and mutiny amongst the men, and Drake hanged him with his own hands on the coast of Patagonia.[1] Winter, the other captain, drifted back to England again from Tierra del Fuego, whilst Drake in the little *Pelican* went on his great voyage of plunder round the world. All Europe rang with the news of his ravages in the South Seas, and the shareholders, says Mendoza, "are beside themselves with joy." But the feelings of peaceful English merchants, and of Burghley himself, were far different. They saw that Spain had been attacked wantonly, her mariners hanged, her treasure stolen without legal excuse, her sacred edifices ransacked, and it was felt that a war of retaliation was inevitable, in which all England would suffer for the dishonest profit of a few.

One day towards the end of September 1580, after an absence of nearly three years, when most people had given up Drake for lost, the *Pelican* sailed quietly into Plymouth Sound, bringing in her hold plundered riches incalculable. Drake posted up to London, hoping doubtless that Elizabeth's greed would overcome her fears of war. He was closeted for six hours with the Queen; but when he was summoned to the Council not one of his own backers was there, but only Burghley, Sussex, Crofts—a Spanish agent—and Secretary Wilson. They ordered all his treasure to be brought to the Tower, and a precise inventory made of it, preliminary to its restitution. When the order was taken to Leicester, Walsingham, and Hatton, they refused to sign, and exerted their influ-

[1] 20th June 1578. Doughty confessed that he had given Burghley a plan of the voyage. It was this, unquestionably, that sealed Doughty's fate.

ence with the Queen to get it suspended. Mendoza raged and threatened. The Queen was in mortal fear of war, and had promised that Drake should be punished if he came back. But she loved money, and was not blind to the injury that had been done to her probable foe by Drake's boldness. So she temporised as usual, accepted Drake's presents graciously, and gradually came round to making a hero of the great seaman, in spite of Mendoza's talk of war and vengeance. She must have proofs against Drake before she punished him, she said. Besides, what were the Spanish troops doing in Ireland? When the last Spanish-Papal soldier was withdrawn, she would talk about the restitution of Drake's plunder—not before.[1] At present she was the aggrieved party. Gifts and bribes showered from Drake upon the Councillors; but when Burghley was offered 3000 crowns' worth of fine gold, he refused it, saying he could not receive a present from a man who had stolen all he had,[2] and Sussex also declined any portion of the booty. Once more it was Burghley's task to avert or provide against the war with Spain, which the ineptitude and cupidity of others had brought within measurable distance.

[1] Mendoza writes to the King (23rd October 1580): "Sussex, Burghley, Crofts, the Admiral, and others insist that the Queen should retain the treasure in her own hands in the Tower, and if your Majesty will give them the satisfaction they desire about Ireland, the treasure may be restored, after reimbursing the adventurers for their outlay. . . . Leicester and Hatton advocate that Drake should not be personally punished, nor made to restore the plunder if the business is carried before the tribunals. The fine excuse they give is that there is nothing in the treaties between the countries which prohibits Englishmen from going to the Indies."

[2] Spanish State Papers.

CHAPTER XIII

1581–1584

ALENÇON had nominally accepted the sovereignty of Flanders offered to him by the States of Ghent in the autumn of 1580; but whilst the Huguenots were in arms against his brother, he had no force of men to enable him to enter and assume the government of his new dominion. He had industriously striven to draw Elizabeth into a marriage, or into aiding him in Flanders as a price for her jilting him; but she had always been too clever for him, and kept on the right side of a positive compromise. When the fears of war with Spain engendered in England by Drake's depredations became acute, and the Spanish aid to the Irish rebels could no longer be concealed, it was necessary once more for England to draw close to France. A request was accordingly sent for a special French embassy to come to England empowered to settle the details of the Alençon marriage and a national alliance. Elizabeth's letters to Alençon became more affectionate than ever: she promised him 200,000 crowns of Drake's plunder to pay German mercenaries to support him in Flanders, she sent the lovelorn Prince a wedding-ring, she petted and bribed his agent until her own courtiers were all jealous; and under the influence of Burghley and Sussex, once more the marriage negotiations assumed a serious aspect, whilst Leicester and Hatton chafed in the background.

The activity of the seminary priests and missionaries,

in conjunction with the Papal invasion of Ireland, had been answered in England by fresh severity against the Catholics. The gaols were all full to overflowing with English recusants; fresh proclamations were issued against harbouring priests; and spies at home and abroad were following the ubiquitous movements of the zealous young members of the Society of Jesus, who yearned for the crown of martyrdom. There is no doubt that to some extent the new persecution of the Catholics was for the purpose of reconciling the Puritans to the Alençon match, but it was still more owing to the genuine alarm of a war against Spain and the Pope.

Parliament opened on the 16th January 1581, after twenty-four prorogations, this only being its third session, although it was elected in 1572. We have already seen that the Puritan party was strong in the House of Commons, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Walter Mildmay, in his speech, voiced the general feeling of the country at the dangers that seemed impending. "Our enemies sleep not," he said, "and it behoveth us not to be careless, as though all were past; but rather to think that there is but a piece of the storm over, and that the greater part of the tempest remaineth behind, and is like to fall upon us by the malice of the Pope, the most capital enemy of the Queen and this State."[1] He denounced the "absolutions, dispensations, reconciliations, and such other things of Rome. You see how lately he (the Pope) hath sent hither a sort of hypocrites, naming themselves Jesuits, a rabble of vagrant friars, newly sprung up, running through the world to trouble the Church of God." The aim of the oration, of course, was to lead the House to vote liberal supplies for the defence of the country, and in this it was

[1] D'Ewes' Journal.

successful; though, when the Puritan majority endeavoured to appoint days of fasting and humiliation by Parliamentary vote, they were rapped over the knuckles by the Queen, as they had been in the previous session, for interfering with her prerogative.[1]

The country, in fact, was now thoroughly alive to the danger into which it had drifted, and Lord Burghley's hand once more took the tiller, to remedy, so far as he might, the evils which had resulted from the temporary abandonment of his cautious policy.[2] His task was not an easy one to settle the preliminaries of the pompous embassy which was to come from France. There were a host of questions to be considered. The Queen would insist upon the Ambassadors being of the highest rank, and having full powers. Leicester and Hatton objected to their coming at all; Alençon insisted that they should be only empowered to negotiate a marriage, and not an alliance; whilst Cobham, the English Ambassador, endeavoured ineffectually to draw Henry III. into a pledge to break with Spain about

[1] Sir Walter Mildmay introduced a bill in this Parliament by which reconciliation to Rome should be punishable as high treason, the saying of mass by a fine of 200 marks and a year's imprisonment, and the hearing of mass half that penalty. Absence from church was to be punished by a fine of £20 a month, and unlicensed schoolmasters were to be imprisoned for a year. The bill met with much opposition by the Lords and by Burghley's party, and was somewhat lessened in severity before it became law.

[2] How entirely Elizabeth herself depended upon the Burghley policy now, is proved by a remark reported by Mendoza (27th February). D'Aubigny was quite paramount in Scotland, and Morton was in prison, his doom practically sealed. Mendoza reports that the Earl of Huntingdon, Leicester's brother-in-law, Warden of the Marches, had connived at a raid of Borderers into England as far as Carlisle, where some Englishmen were killed, in order that he might have an excuse for crossing into Scotland and attacking Morton's enemies. When the Queen heard of this she was extremely angry. "What is this I hear about Scotland?" she asked Walsingham. "Did I order anything of this sort to be done?" Walsingham minimised the affair. The answer was, "You Puritan! you will never be content until you drive me into war on all sides, and bring the King of Spain on to me." (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.)

Portugal before the embassy left France. At last all was arranged, and in April the Ambassadors, with a suite of two hundred persons, arrived in London.[1] Drake's silver was drawn upon liberally for presents; a new gallery was built at Whitehall for the entertainment of the envoys; Philip Sidney wrote a masque, and played the fool for once for their delectation; and joust and tourney, ball and banquet, succeeded each other hourly, to the exclusion of more serious business.

Leicester had done his best to stop the embassy, but without effect, and wrote to Lord Shrewsbury that he "was greatly troubled at these great lords coming."[2] He tried to work upon the Queen's weak side, by assuring her that the one object of the Frenchmen was to lead her into heavy expenditure, and so to enfeeble her, that she might the more easily be conquered.[3] This, at all events, caused some restriction in the expenditure; for the Queen suddenly discovered that it would not be dignified for her to entertain the Ambassadors or pay for horses until they actually arrived in London. Burghley may be presumed to have been delighted at their coming, for he made no effort to limit the cost of his banquet to them at Cecil House, in the Strand, which was one of the most splendid entertainments offered to them. There is in the Lansdowne MSS. a full relation of this splendid feast of the 30th April, with the bills of fare, accounts of expenses, &c., which gives some notion of the splendour and extent of Burghley's

[1] It consisted of two very young princes of the blood sent for appearance' sake, Francis de Bourbon, Dauphin d'Auvergne, and Charles de Bourbon, Count de Soissons; Marshal de Cossé, Pinart, La Mothe Fénélon, Brisson, and a great number of courtiers of rank. So desirous was Elizabeth that they should be impressed with the splendour of her court, that she ordered that the London mercers should sell their fine stuffs at a reduction of 25 per cent. in order that the courtiers might be handsomely dressed.

[2] Lodge, vol. ii.

[3] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

household. There were consumed two stags, 40s.; two bucks, 20s.; six kids, 24s.; six pigs, 10s.; six shins of beef, 24s.; four gammons of bacon, 16s.; one swan, 10s.; three cranes, 20s.; twenty-four curlews, 24s.; fifteen pheasants, 30s.; fifty-four herons, £8, 15s.; eight partridges, 8s., and vast quantities of meat of all sorts; and sturgeon, conger, salmon, trout, lampreys, lobsters, prawns, gurnards, oysters, and many sorts of fresh-water fish. Herbs and salads cost no less than 36s., and cream, 27s. There were consumed 3300 eggs, 360 lbs. of butter, 42lbs. of spices, and three gallons of rose-water. £11, 7s. 3d. was paid for the hire of extra vessels and glass; flowers and rushes cost £5, 7s. 10d., and Turkey carpets, £11. This Gargantuan feast was served by forty-nine gentlemen and thirty-four servants, and was washed down with £75 worth of beer as well as Gascon, sack, hippocras, and other wine costing £21; the entire expenditure on the afternoon's feeding being £649, 1s. 5d.

Though Burghley and Sussex had brought over the embassy in hopes of a marriage, or at least an alliance, the Queen changed from hour to hour. When Leicester complained to her, she silenced him by saying that she could avoid a marriage whenever she liked by bringing Alençon over whilst the embassy was in England, and then setting the Frenchmen at loggerheads, and by subsidising the Prince's attempts in Flanders. At the same time she certainly led Sussex, and probably Burghley, to believe that she might be in earnest at last.

After some weeks the elder Ambassadors got tired of trifling, and begged the Queen to appoint a committee of the Council to negotiate with them. The great banquet at Burghley House was the preliminary meeting, and a paper at Hatfield, endorsed by Burghley, lays down, in the usual precise manner of the time, every aspect of the matter. The propositions are three: 1st, if the Queen

should remain unmarried; 2nd, if she should marry Alençon; and 3rd, if she should enter into some strait league with the French. In the first eventuality the Queen must strengthen herself and weaken her opponents; Scotland must be reduced to the same friendship that existed before the advent of D'Aubigny; James's marriage to a Catholic must be prevented; Mary Stuart must be held tightly; Ireland must be subdued; the entire domination of Spain over the Netherlands must be avoided, and an alliance concluded either with France or the German Protestants. In the second eventuality, that the Queen should marry Alençon, the writer urges that the wedding should take place without delay, but always on condition that religion in England must be safeguarded, and Henry III. pledged to provide most of the means for Alençon's enterprise in Flanders. On the other hand, if the marriage is not to take place, care must be taken that no offence is given to the suitor. "Since the treaty with Simier many accidents have happened to make this marriage hateful to the people, as the invasion of Ireland by the Pope, the determination of the Pope to stir up rebellion in this realm by sending in a number of English Jesuits, who have by books, challenges, and secret instructions and seductions, procured a great defection of many people to relinquish their obedience to her Majesty. Likewise there is a manifest practice in Scotland, by D'Aubigny, to alienate the young King of Scotland, both from favouring the Protestant religion and from amity to her Majesty and her realm, notwithstanding that he hath only been conserved in his crown at her Majesty's charges."[1]

Although this paper has usually been treated as emanating from Burghley, I consider it much more likely to have been the work of Walsingham. There is at

[1] Hatfield Papers, part ii.

Hatfield, of similar date (2nd May 1581), a note, all in the Lord Treasurer's hand, for his speech to the Ambassadors, and this is preceded by a private remark that, before a definite answer can be given, "it is necessary to know her Majesty's own mind, to what end she will have this treaty tend, either to a marriage or no marriage, amity or no amity." As Burghley seems not to have possessed this information, it is not surprising that the draft of his speech simply tends to delay. The Queen has written to Alençon, he says, and must have a reply before she can say anything definite about the marriage; but as there has been some talk on both sides of a close alliance, the Queen expects the Ambassadors to be empowered to deal with that also.[1]

The Ambassadors themselves give an account of a speech of Burghley's, either on this or another occasion, in which he declared that, although he was formerly against the marriage, he now personally thought it desirable. Brisson replied in a similar strain, and then the strong Protestantism of Walsingham asserted itself. He said that the hope of the marriage had caused the Pope to flood England with Jesuits and invade Ireland, the Catholics in England were already in high feather about it, and Alençon had broken faith, and had entered into negotiations with the States General, since Simier took the draft treaty. Besides, he said, look at the danger of child-bearing to the Queen at her age. The marriage would probably drag England into war at least, and until the Queen received a reply to her letters the negotiations for the marriage must stand over.[2]

It is quite evident that the Queen desired an alliance without a marriage, and to draw France into open hostility to Spain, whilst she remained unpledged. But

[1] Hatfield Papers, part ii.

[2] Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris: *Fonds français*, 3308.

Secretary Pinart was almost as clever as Burghley, and played his cards well, and no progress was made. Let them marry first, said Pinart, it would be easy to make an alliance afterwards. Affairs were thus at a deadlock. Alençon was on the frontier with a body of men ready to enter Flanders to relieve Cambray, when his brother's forces dispersed them. It was then clear to the Prince that he must depend upon the Queen of England alone; and ceding to the pressure of his agent in England, he suddenly rushed over to London (2nd June), to the confusion of the Ambassadors, who shut themselves up to avoid meeting him. The Queen was all smiles, for she was satisfied now that Alençon was obliged to look to her only for aid, marriage or no marriage. Alençon went back after a few days as secretly as he had come, but every one saw that the Queen had won the trick; and the pompous embassy went back loaded with presents, but only taking with it a draft marriage treaty, accompanied by a letter from Elizabeth, saying that she might alter her mind if she liked, in which case the treaty was to be considered as annulled.[1]

In the meanwhile Mendoza was watching closely the attempts of Leicester to persuade the Queen to aid Don Antonio in Portugal, as well as to provide means for Alençon in Flanders. Walsingham had laid a trap for Mendoza, who was induced to pay a large sum of money to some Hollanders who promised to betray Flushing to the Spaniards, but really did just the opposite. The Hollanders left with the Spanish Ambassador the child son of one of them as a hostage. By orders of Walsing-

[1] In addition to the letter of the Queen, there is another document signed by the Ambassadors and by the English Council, saying that the terms shall not be considered binding upon the Queen, unless within six weeks she and Alençon report in writing to the King of France that they have arranged certain personal questions to their mutual satisfaction. Both documents are printed *in extenso* in Digges.

ham the embassy was violated and the boy taken away; and this amongst many other grievances was the source of endless squabbling with the Queen, who invariably retorted to all Mendoza's complaints that Philip had connived at the invasion of Ireland. After one of his interviews with the Queen (24th June) he writes: "It is impossible for me to express the insincerity with which she and her ministers proceed. . . . She contradicts me every moment in my version of the negotiations. . . . I understood from her and Cecil, who is one of the few ministers who show any signs of straightforwardness, that they understood that your Majesty intended to write to the Queen assuring her that the succour had not been sent to Ireland on your behalf. I told them that the matter referred to the Pope alone, but Cecil said they wished to see a letter from your Majesty;" whereupon Mendoza angrily told him that the word of an Ambassador was sufficient.

On the same day that this conversation took place, Burghley's task of keeping the peace was rendered still more difficult by the arrival in England of the fugitive Portuguese Pretender, Don Antonio, who was at once taken up by Leicester and Hatton. The Spanish Ambassador was told by Hatton that if he wanted his passports he could have them, and the Queen almost insultingly refused him audience. Mendoza then wrote her a letter, which he thought the Queen would be obliged to show to the whole Council, "where I was sure some of the members would point out to her the danger she was running in refusing to receive me and thus irritating your Majesty. Cecil, particularly, who is the person upon whom the Queen depends in matters of importance, had seen me a few days before, and said how sorry he was that these things should occur, and

that he should be unable to remedy them, as he was sure I could not avoid being offended."[1]

A few weeks afterwards Mendoza made another attempt to see the Queen, who was then in the country. She said that as Philip had not written any excuse about the Spanish expedition to Ireland, she did not see her way to receive the Ambassador. If he had anything to say he might tell it to two Councillors. Burghley was known to be the most favourable of them, and had expressed to Mendoza his ignorance that the audience had been refused. "He did not think it wise to refuse me; and as he is the most important of the ministers I thought best to inform him of the reply I had received, and to say I should like to see him." Burghley was ill of gout at Theobalds at the time, but shortly afterwards he came to town and asked Mendoza to see him at Leicester House, "his gout preventing him from coming further." Mendoza found him with Leicester together, and in reply to the stereotyped complaints of the Ambassador about Drake's plunder, the aid to the Portuguese, and the refusal of audience, the Treasurer firmly told him that the Queen thought he had been remiss in not obtaining a letter from the King disclaiming the Irish expedition. This Mendoza haughtily refused to do, and the conference ended unsatisfactorily.[2]

It is evident that at this period (August 1581) Burghley was in despair of keeping on friendly relations with Spain. The Queen and Leicester had determined to subsidise Alençon in Flanders, and to countenance Don Antonio's attempts on Portugal. This coming after the

[1] Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth.

[2] The real reason for the Queen's ostentatious slighting of Mendoza at the time was to draw the King of France on, and make him believe that she was willing to break with Spain.

retention of Drake's plunder, and refusal of audience to the Ambassador, seemed to make the continuance of peace between the two countries impossible, and Burghley was once more obliged to turn to the necessary, but to him distasteful, alternative—a close union with France.

The great French embassy had gone back defeated, for they saw that Elizabeth was befooling Alençon, and that the national alliance would only be made on terms advantageous to English interests in Flanders. But it was necessary for Henry III. and his mother to cling to England if they were effectually to oppose Philip in Portugal. The Guises were becoming more overbearing and powerful than ever under the popular Duke Henry; they were known to be turning towards Spain, and their ambitions were high both for themselves and for their cousin Mary Stuart. To avoid the complete subjugation of France to their ends, the King was therefore obliged to court Elizabeth, and suffer her to have her way with Alençon and Flanders. Henry III. consequently asked Elizabeth, through Somers, to name a day for the marriage, simultaneously with which an offensive and defensive alliance would be concluded, and a secret agreement entered into with regard to the establishment of Alençon in Flanders. This, of course, was understood to be merely fencing, and Walsingham himself was sent to France to conclude a treaty. He was instructed to say that the French were mistaken in supposing that the marriage was settled. The Queen could not consent to the marriage now, for, as Alençon was already in arms against the King of Spain, it would "bring us and our realme into war, which in no respect our realme and subjects can accept." But if the King will accept her secret aid to Alençon's plan in Flanders, and the opposition to Spain in Portugal, she will be willing to conclude

an offensive and defensive alliance with him. In any case, the marriage was to be abandoned. Walsingham saw Alençon in Picardy before going to Paris, and, as may be supposed, the young Prince was in despair at the Queen's fickleness. He was certain his brother would not make an alliance without the marriage, as he feared the Queen would slip out of it, leaving France alone face to face with Spain.[1] If, said Catharine, who was with her son, the Queen of England broke her word about the marriage for fear of her people, she might break an alliance for a similar reason. But Walsingham made it clear to both of them that Elizabeth would not allow herself to be dragged into war with Spain, though covert aid should be given to her late suitor. Poor Alençon wept and stormed, but in vain. Anything short of marriage was useless to him, he said. His brother neither had helped nor would help him against Spain, unless the marriage took place. He himself would come to England for an answer from the Queen's lips as soon as he had raised the siege of Cambray. Elizabeth complained of Walsingham's management of the interview; he could rarely content her. He had, she said, been too abrupt in breaking off the marriage. Burghley pointed out to her that she could not have all her own way. She wanted, he said, to keep the marriage afoot, and yet not to marry; to aid Alençon secretly, whilst France aided him openly; to conclude an alliance by which she gained everything, and France nothing.[2]

Elizabeth, in a rage, swore that Leicester and the Puritans were dragging her into all sorts of expense and trouble,[3] from which she could not extricate herself with-

[1] Walsingham to the Queen: "fearing lest when he should be embarqued your Majesty would slip the collar" (Walsingham Papers). See also Walsingham's letters to Burghley, in the same.

[2] Burghley to Walsingham; *in extenso* in Digges.

[3] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

out war. Walsingham was soon disgusted with his task, for he could make but little progress in Paris, and the Queen found fault with him constantly. He answered boldly, almost rudely, to all her strictures. He told her that with all this hesitation about the marriage "you lose the benefit of time, which, if years be considered, is not the least thing to be weighed. If you mean it (the marriage) not, then assure yourself it is one of the worst remedies you can use. . . . When your Majesty doth see in what doubtful terms you stand with foreign princes, then you do wish with great affection that opportunities offered had not been overslipped; but when they are offered you, if they be accompanied by charges, they are altogether neglected. The respect of charges hath lost Scotland, and I would to God I had no cause to think it might not put your Highness into peril of losing England."[1]

Even Burghley, with all his influence, was in despair at getting the Queen to spend any money. Walsingham had told the Queen that if she lent Alençon 100,000 ducats secretly he might be appeased. Burghley pointed out to her that her niggardliness was ruining the chance of effectually weakening Spain. "In no wise," writes Burghley, "would she have the enterprise of the Low Countries lost, but she will not particularly warrant you to offer aid. She allegeth that now the King (of France) hath gone so far he will not abandon it. . . . Her Majesty is also very cold in the cause of Don Antonio, alleging that she liketh it only by opportunity [importunity?] of her Council; and now that all things are ready, ships, victuals, and men, the charges whereof come to £12,000, she hath been moved to find £2000 more needful for the full furniture of the voyage, wherewith she is greatly offended with Mr. Hawkins and Drake, as the charges are greater

[1] Hatfield State Papers, part ii.

than was said to her . . . hereupon her Majesty is content not to give a penny more; and now after Drake and Hawkins have made shift for the £2000, she will not let them depart until she be assured by you that the French will aid Don Antonio, for she feareth to be left alone. . . . All these things do marvellously stay her Majesty . . . yet she loseth all the charges spent in vain, and the poor King (Antonio) is utterly lost."[1]

But Burghley might reason and remonstrate, Walsingham might tell her, as he did, that the penuriousness would bring her to ruin, Elizabeth would not open her purse strings until it was almost too late. Alençon had made a dash into Flanders soon after seeing Walsingham in August, and relieved Cambray, and then being absolutely penniless, his brother, in a fright at his boldness, refusing any aid, the Queen was obliged to send him £20,000 to prevent the abandonment of the whole business, and a union with the Guises which he threatened. He returned to France after a few weeks, and then again announced his intention of coming to England to exert his personal influence on the Queen. To stave off the visit several other sums of money were sent to him. Leicester, too, strove his hardest to stop it; but Alençon's agents and Alençon's lovelorn epistles were more flattering to the Queen even than Leicester, and the lover came early in November.

Although Walsingham had almost arranged a draft treaty of alliance without marriage when he was in Paris, it fell through on the eternal question of the Queen's "charges" and responsibility, and when Alençon arrived in England the whole matter was as far from settlement as ever. Of the extraordinary cajolery by which the Queen alternately raised Alençon to the pinnacle of hope and plunged him to the depths of

[1] Burghley to Walsingham; *in extenso* in Digges.

despair during his stay with her at Richmond and Whitehall, a full description will be found elsewhere.[1] By her dexterity she bound him personally to her, and made it appear that the only obstacles to the match were those raised by the King of France. From the coming of Alençon it is clear that Leicester alone understood the Queen's game. The earl was radiant and joyous, which made Sussex distrust the result, notwithstanding appearances. So far as he could Lord Burghley held aloof, although when the Prince came to London he waited upon him with other Councillors formally every morning at nine. When the famous scene was enacted (22nd November) in the gallery at Whitehall, where the Queen boldly kissed her suitor on the lips and publicly pledged herself to marry him,[2] Burghley was confined to his bed with an attack of gout. The Queen sent him an account of what had passed. Mendoza reports that he thereupon exclaimed, "Blessed be the Lord that this business has at last reached a point where the Queen, on her part, has done all she can; it is for the country now alone to carry it out." The deduction which Mendoza drew from this exclamation was probably the correct one. To him it proved that the whole plan was insincere on the part of Elizabeth, and that the intention was to cause conditions to be imposed by Parliament which the King of France could not accept, and then to throw the responsibility of the breach upon the latter.

This was all very well, but it was a reverse for Burghley's policy. Leicester and Walsingham had drawn the Queen into a position of almost open hostility to Spain; and yet a close union with France was rendered

[1] "Courtships of Queen Elizabeth," by the present writer.

[2] See Camden; *Memoires de Nevers*; Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth; and "Courtships of Queen Elizabeth."

difficult by Elizabeth's fickleness and dread of responsibility, and by Leicester's jealousy. As usual in such circumstances, Burghley cautiously endeavoured to redress the balance. When the treaty with France seemed assured, Mendoza had been refused audience, and on remonstrating with Burghley he had found him far less willing to be friendly than before. Leicester quite openly talked about turning the Spanish Ambassador out of England, and even Burghley had replied, to an application for audience on behalf of Mendoza to deliver a letter from Philip to the Queen, who was at Nonsuch, that the Queen was alone and unattended by Councillors, "and as Don Bernardino is to bring letters to the Queen from so great an enemy to her as his master, it is meet that he should be received as the minister of such a one." When the Spaniard did see the Queen (October), his threats and complaints about Don Antonio and Alençon were met with anger and indignation by her. All the old complaints on both sides were repeated, and both then and later Mendoza was certain by the attitude of Leicester, Hatton, and Walsingham, that they were determined to have war with Spain, and that Burghley, for once, would not stand in their way.

But a change came in the attitude of the latter in December. It seemed then impossible for the Queen to withdraw her pledges to Alençon without a breach with France, whilst she could hardly help him without a war with Spain. Scottish affairs, moreover, were a subject of deep anxiety. D'Aubigny was now master, and Morton, to Elizabeth's indignation, had been executed. Catholic priests and Jesuits were known to be flitting backwards and forwards; and worst of all, Mary Stuart had, for the first time since her flight, opened up friendly negotiations with her son's Government, and had formally joined James with herself in her sovereignty. She had more-

over written confidently asking for many fresh concessions which Elizabeth was loath to grant her.[1]

Any appearance of an approach of the French and Scots always drew England and Spain together, and with the added dangers already cited, this was quite sufficient to change Lord Burghley's tone. Mendoza accordingly reports (25th December 1581) that, at a meeting of the Council held to consider the situation, Burghley suggested that an alliance should be made with Spain, and an agreement arrived at with regard to the Low Countries. This was approved of by the Lord Chancellor (Bromley), the Lord Admiral (Lincoln), and Crofts. Sussex held aloof, wavering between his enmity to France and Leicester, and his attachment to Protestantism; whilst Leicester, Walsingham, Hatton, and Knollys were strenuously opposed to any approach to Spain, as they were, even more violently, to Burghley's proposal that Drake's plunder, or what was left of it, should be restored. A few days afterwards Burghley had some business with a Spanish merchant established in London, and to him he expressed a desire that negotiations should be opened for an agreement between the two countries. When the merchant carried the message to Mendoza, the latter attributed the suggestion entirely to the fear which he had aroused by his firmness, and he made no response. Mendoza himself, indeed, one of the warlike Alba school, had now no hope or desire for peace. The rise of D'Aubigny in Scotland and the coming of the Jesuits had quite altered the position during the last year, and Mendoza had in his hands a plot that seemed to promise the triumph of the Catholics.

As early as April 1581, Mary Stuart had renewed her approaches to Spain through the Archbishop of Glasgow

[1] Wilkes, Clerk of the Council, was sent to confer with Mary upon the subject. His report in full is in State Papers, Scotland, and at Hatfield.

in Paris. "Things were now," she said, "better disposed than ever in Scotland for a return to its former condition . . . and English affairs could be dealt with subsequently. The King, her son, was quite determined to return to the Catholic religion, and much inclined to an open rupture with the Queen of England." She begged for armed aid from Philip, to be landed first in Ireland, and to enter Scotland at a given signal after the alliance between Scotland and Spain had been signed. Nothing came of this at the time; and after several other attempts on the part of Mary to get into touch with the Spaniards, she became distrustful of her Ambassador (Archbishop Beton) and other intermediaries, and contrived in November to communicate with Mendoza direct. She had heard that all the priests who flocked into Scotland and England looked to him for guidance, and that through them he had sent a message to the Scottish Catholics, saying that everything now depended upon Scotland's reverting to the old faith. The English Catholic nobles then at liberty had, at Mendoza's instance, formed a society with this object, and secretly sent two priests to sound James and D'Aubigny, and to promise that they would raise the north of England, release Mary, and secure the English succession to James. They brought back a favourable reply, which the ambassador at once conveyed to Allen and Persons on the continent. This was late in the autumn of 1581, and Mendoza looked coldly upon Burghley's new advances, for he was now the centre of the plot to overthrow Elizabeth by means of the Scottish Catholics, a plot in which, against his will, he was obliged to make use of the Jesuit missionaries, who themselves at first had no idea of the Spanish political aims that underlay the conversion of Scotland to Catholicism.

Side by side with the Jesuits, Creighton, Persons, and Holt, who were employed in the political movement,

were others who had been sent to England and were intended purely for spiritual work. They had been extremely successful in their propaganda, and had once more infused spirit into the English Catholic party. This could not be done without the printing and dissemination of books, as well as preaching, and the spies of the Council were directed to track to earth the priests who were at the bottom of the movement. Nearly every writer upon the subject has taken for granted that Lord Burghley was at the bottom of the persecution which followed. Such, however, does not appear to have been the case. As we have seen, the Lord Treasurer insisted upon some uniformity in the practice of the Anglican Church, but he must have known that many of his closest friends, and the colleagues upon whom he depended in the Council, were Catholics, and his life-long tendency was to a political union with Spain, the champion of Catholic Christendom. He was determined, it is true, to crush treason to the Queen and the institutions of the country, no matter who suffered; and when Catholicism meant revolution he harried it fiercely; but he was no persecutor for the sake of religion itself,[1] and the cruel torture and execution of Campion, Sherwin, and Briant,[2] during Alençon's visit to England (1st December 1581), for denying the Queen's supremacy, were almost certainly prompted in the main by Walsingham, Knollys, and the Puritans, who were in a fever of apprehension lest the marriage with Alençon would lead to toleration of the Catholic faith. The men actually executed were not in fact employed in the political portion of the propaganda at all, but were honest religious missionaries; but they, and the scores

[1] See his own book, "Treatise on the Execution of Justice," written in 1583 in answer to Allen's attacks.

[2] See Simpson's Life of Campion, Spanish State Papers, Camden's Elizabeth, and Allen's *De Persecutione Anglicana.*

of other Catholics who were swept into prison at the time, were useful object lessons for Walsingham and Leicester, whose aims, as we have seen, were in direct opposition to those of Burghley.[1] The latter, indeed, was at the very time of the execution approaching Mendoza with suggestions for an alliance with Spain, which were coldly received for the reasons already explained.

During Alençon's stay in England, the Queen, who was playing her own game, which was to reduce the Prince to utter dependence upon her and to distrust of his brother, had been constantly thwarted by the jealousy of Leicester and Hatton. They were for granting enormous sums to the suitor to get rid of him at any cost, which was no part of the Queen's plan. Lord Burghley alone of the Councillors never displeased her in the matter; whenever it was a question of large expenditure, he always had a convenient attack of gout, and thus never openly thwarted the Queen. The difficulty was to get Alençon out of the country without ruinous expense or further pledges, and when it was found that all the Queen's persuasions were unavailing she had to employ Burghley's diplomacy. He began by inflaming the young Prince's ambition, and enlarging upon the splendid destiny awaiting him in his new sovereignty, which was now clamouring for his presence. Promises were made never meant to be literally fulfilled, of the vast sums the Queen would contribute to his support,

[1] Burghley, writing to Lord Shrewsbury (Lansdowne MSS., 982) in August 1581, telling him of the trial and execution for treason of the priest Everard Duckett, who had denied the Queen's authority, says in reference to Campion and his companions, "If they shall do the like, the law is like to correct them. For their actions are not matters of religion, but merely of state, tending directly to the deprivation of her Majesty's crown." Campion, he says, had been brought before Leicester and Bromley, but had not confessed anything of importance. It appears to have been the result of the admissions wrung from Campion and others about this time as to the houses in which they had lodged that led to the great number of Catholic arrests all over England.

and at last, after infinite trouble, he was induced to promise to sail for Flanders. He wished to stay until the new year; but when Burghley pointed out to him the large amount of money he would have to spend in presents he seemed to give way, for money he had none. But when the time came he still stayed on. The Queen told Burghley after supper on Christmas night that she would not marry the lad to be empress of the world, and that he must get rid of him somehow. Catharine de Medici, the Prince of Orange, the German princes, and the French Ambassador all added their pressure to that of the Queen and Burghley to get Alençon out of England. Leicester and Hatton fumed and threatened. Burghley at last frankly told the Queen that the only way to get rid of her suitor was to provide a sum of ready money for him, and promise that he should come back to England as soon as he was crowned. The Queen did not like the alternative, and said she must wait for the King of France's answer to her last demands. This time Catharine de Medici beat her with her own weapons. The answer was a full acceptance of everything required by the English; and to make it more complete, Alençon said he was willing to become a Protestant.

This was indeed alarming, and the Queen sent hurriedly to Burghley to get her out of the scrape. His suggestion this time was that she should demand Calais and Havre as security for the fulfilment of the King's promises, which was a device after her own heart. But still Alençon would not go, and the Queen became seriously alarmed. She promised him £60,000; but Burghley was opposed to any such sum as that being paid, or indeed more than was necessary for the Prince's voyage. The Queen said that she did not mean to pay it, but only to promise it, which was quite another matter. It is evident that Burghley was now quite

undeceived, and against both the pretence of marriage and any large support being given to Alençon. He dreaded the revenge of France for the insult put upon it; and of Spain, for aiding the Frenchman's usurpation of Philip's sovereignty under English protection. His remedy, as usual, was a friendship with Spain. Walsingham, on the other hand, was all in favour of vigorous help to Orange and a war with Spain. The Queen usually leant to the side of Burghley, but was swayed hither and thither by her fears of France, by Pinart's threats, Alençon's tears, Leicester's jealousy, and her own greed and vanity.

At last after infinite trouble Alençon sailed with fifteen ships, attended by Leicester (sorely against his will), Hunsdon, Sidney, Willoughby, Howard, and Norris, to take upon himself the sovereignty of Holland and Flanders. The Queen after all had to provide a large sum of money, but it was sent to the States, and not entrusted to Alençon, except a personal present of £25,000 from the Queen. Leicester escaped from the new sovereign's side on the very day he was crowned, and hurried back to his mistress's side. He reported that Alençon and the French were hated by the Protestant Dutchmen, who had only admitted him because the Queen of England was behind him. The English Ambassador in Paris at the same time sent word that Henry III. had repudiated his brother's action, and had denounced as traitors all those who aided him.

This was exactly what Elizabeth feared. She had offended both the great powers, and was alone. She swore at Leicester for sanctioning, by his presence, the investiture of Alençon; she railed at Walsingham as a knave for dragging her into such a business; and she insisted upon Burghley, who was ill with fever in London, getting up and coming to Windsor to tell her what

to do. When he appeared, she asked him whether it would not be better for her at once to become friendly with Spain. Thus, though the sagacious Lord Treasurer had let her go her own way, she had at last been brought by circumstances to propose his policy again. "He replied that nothing would suit her better, especially if peace could be arranged in the Netherlands by the concession of liberty of conscience."[1] Sussex was of the same opinion, but distrusted both the Queen and Burghley, who, he said, had spoken coolly on the subject on the Council. There is, however, no reason to doubt that the Treasurer was sincere in his desire for such an arrangement, which indeed was the only one which seemed to promise peace to England.

In the meanwhile the Spanish and Jesuit plot in Scotland was progressing. Guise had drifted further and further away from Henry III. and his mother, from whom he saw he could get no aid for Mary Stuart or his own ambitious plans. When, therefore, the Queen of Scots had offered her submission and the sending of her son to Spain, he had separated himself from French interests, and tendered his own humble services to Philip. This made all the difference. If the Holy League and this undertaking made the Guises Catholics and Spaniards before they were Frenchmen, Philip need have no hesitation in helping their niece to the crowns of Scotland and England; and the Jesuits were set to work to secure James and D'Aubigny, whilst Mary Stuart's spirits rose high. The Scottish Catholic nobles were ready to rise, and even, if necessary, to kill or deport the King if he would not be a Catholic. All they asked was a force of two thousand foreign troops. D'Aubigny entered eagerly into the affair, and by the spring of 1582 all was arranged, when the Jesuit emis-

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

saries and D'Aubigny between them mismanaged it. Guise was foolishly brought into the plan by D'Aubigny, and he wanted to invade the south of England with his troops at the same time. D'Aubigny made exaggerated claims for himself, and the Scottish Catholic nobles followed suit. Philip recognised that Guise was still playing for his own hand, though not for France. If Mary was to be Queen of Great Britain and his humble servant, she must owe her crown to him, and not to Guise. Philip therefore grew cool, and the raid of Ruthven and the banishment of D'Aubigny, by which young James fell into the hands of the Protestants (August 1582), effectually put an end to the projects of invasion for a time.

On the 18th March 1582, Alençon in Antwerp was giving an entertainment on the occasion of his birthday, when the Prince of Orange was stabbed, it was thought mortally, by a young Spaniard hired by those greater than himself. The one cry, both in Holland and in England, was, that Alençon and his false Frenchmen were at the bottom of the crime, and, but for the fortitude of Orange, every Frenchman in the Netherlands would have been massacred. Elizabeth was beside herself with fear. Her first impulse was to get Alençon out of Flanders, even if she brought him to England ; but Walsingham gravely warned her that if the Prince came again she would certainly have to marry him.

Whilst Orange lay between life and death, Leicester, Hatton, Knollys, and Walsingham were for ever urging the Queen boldly to take Flanders and Holland under her own protection, whilst Burghley, aided by Sussex and Crofts, again advocated an arrangement with Spain. But the latter were in a minority ; the Protestant feeling of the country was thoroughly aroused at the attempted murder of Orange, and Burghley was obliged to be cautious. Mendoza was instructed by Philip, March 1582, to use

his influence with the Council to prevent aid being given to Alençon. "I have," writes Mendoza, "tried every artifice to get on good terms with some of them, but they all turn their faces against me, particularly the Lord Treasurer, whom I formerly used to see, the rest of them being openly inimical. Only lately I sought an opportunity of approaching him again, and asked him to see me. He replied that his colleagues looked upon him as being very Spanish in his sympathies, and therefore he could not venture to see me alone, except by the Queen's orders. I had, he said, better communicate my business through Secretary Walsingham, in the ordinary course."[1]

Walsingham, on the other hand, lost no opportunity of widening the breach, in order to force the Queen to more vigorous action in favour of the Dutch Protestants. In May he sent an insulting message to Mendoza, to the effect that the Queen would not receive him until some satisfaction was given about Ireland. The Ambassador at once complained to Burghley. War, he said, might well result from this treatment of him. Burghley endeavoured to minimise the slight. It was a mistake of the messenger, he said, and Mendoza had better write to the Queen. He did so, but with no result but to confirm Walsingham's message, though Elizabeth softened it somewhat by saying, "God forbid that she should ever break with your Majesty, to whom she bore nothing but good-will."[2] When, in July, Alençon demanded more money, Walsingham, Leicester, and Hatton were for sending him £50,000 at once—anything to prevent his coming to England again—but Cecil opposed it vigorously. There was but £80,000 in the Treasury, he said, and so only £30,000 was sent to Flanders.

By the death of Bacon, the fatal illness of Sussex, and

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth. [2] *Ibid.*

the defection of Hatton, Lord Burghley was at this time almost alone in the Council; for Crofts, the Controller, a regular pensioner of Spain and a Catholic, was a man of no influence; and, according to Mendoza, the Lord Treasurer in November told the Queen plainly that she must appoint two more Councillors of his way of thinking, "to oppose Leicester and his gang." It was probably in pursuance of this policy that Burghley cast about for some counterbalancing influence to be used against Leicester.

At the end of 1581 a young captain named Walter Ralegh, whose company in Ireland had been disbanded on the suppression of the Desmond rebellion, had been sent over to England with despatches. He was clever and brilliant, and full of schemes for governing Ireland more cheaply than the Viceroy, Lord Grey, had done. Grey rebuked him for his presumption, and sent him home in semi-disgrace. Leicester was a bitter enemy of Grey's, and was glad to welcome the young captain who impeached his government, and that of Leicester's rival Ormond.[1] Ralegh was invited to the Council-table to explain his plans to Lord Burghley. His recommendations were approved, and submitted to the Queen, who gave him audience. Before many weeks passed (May 1582), favours began to shower upon him; and by the autumn, Leicester and Hatton had taken fright, and were bitterly jealous of him, whilst the Lord Treasurer had cleverly enlisted the new favourite under his banner. He was never a member of the Council, but he had the Queen's ear, and kept it for years; for Leicester was elderly and scorbutic, and Hatton was an affected

[1] Ralegh was certainly known to Leicester before this. He was attached to his suite when he accompanied Alençon to Antwerp in February; and always professed to be specially attached to him personally, even when he was lending his aid to his political opponents.

fribble, whilst Ralegh was young, handsome, and manly, and as wise as he was ambitious.

During the autumn of 1582 the plague raged in London, and Burghley took refuge at Theobalds, where, in November, his recently married young son-in-law, the eldest son of Lord Wentworth died. The letters written on this occasion from Walsingham[1] and Hatton[2] prove that the political opposition in the Council did not degenerate into personal enmity; indeed, nothing is more remarkable than the affectionate regard, and even reverence, which are constantly expressed by Lord Burghley's correspondents towards him. An especially kind thought seems to have occurred to Walsingham. He suggests to Hatton that "it would be some comfort to his lady (*i.e.* Elizabeth Wentworth), if it might please you so to work with her Majesty, as his (Burghley's) other son-in-law (Lord Oxford), who hath long dwelt in her Majesty's displeasure, might be restored to her Highness's good favour."[3]

The Earl of Oxford had constantly been a source of trouble to Lord Burghley. He was extravagant, eccentric, and quarrelsome, and only by the exercise of great forbearance on the part of his father-in-law had any semblance of friendship been kept up. If on this occa-

[1] B. M. Add. MSS., 15,891 : Walsingham to Hatton.

[2] B. M. Lansdowne MSS., 36 : Hatton to Burghley.

[3] The probable cause of the Queen's displeasure with Oxford on this occasion was an affray between him and Sir Thomas Knyvett, one of the Queen's Gentlemen of the Privy Chamber, in March 1582. Nicholas Faunt writes to Anthony Bacon (Bacon Papers, vol. i.): "There has been a fray between my Lord of Oxford and Knyvett, who are both hurt, but Lord Oxford more dangerously. You know," he adds, "Master Knyvett is not meanly beloved at court, and therefore is not likely to speed ill, whatsoever the quarrel be." There is also a most interesting letter from Burghley to Hatton (12th March 1582, B. M. MSS., Add. 91), in which he begs him to intercede with the Queen for Oxford, and recites the whole of the accusations against him.

sion, as is probable, Hatton acceded to Walsingham's suggestion, and persuaded the Queen once more to receive Oxford at court, it was not long before the intractable Earl again misbehaved himself; for on May of the following year (1583) his long-suffering father-in-law appealed to the new favourite, Ralegh, to exert his influence with the Queen to forgive him again. Ralegh's answer,[1] giving a long account of his efforts to move the Queen, shows that Oxford had injured him also. "I am content," he writes, "for your sake to lay the serpent before the fire, as much as in me lieth, that having recovered strength, myself may be most in danger of his poison and sting."

As we have seen, Mary Stuart had never ceased, since the triumph of D'Aubigny, to negotiate through Mendoza for her release and restoration, and the subsequent invasion of England over the Scottish Border. The raid of Ruthven and the fall of D'Aubigny did not at first discourage her. She still believed that the expected arrival of foreign troops, and her son's secret favour of the Catholics, would enable the plot to be carried through,[2] and under this belief it was that she wrote her violent letter of denunciation and complaint to Elizabeth (8th November).[3]

Almost simultaneously with the receipt of this letter in London there arrived the Guisan, La Mothe Fénélon, on his way to Scotland, for the purpose of inquiring into the treatment of D'Aubigny by the Protestant lords, uniting Mary and her son on the throne, and, if possible, to mediate with Elizabeth in favour of the captive Queen; whilst, at the same time, another envoy (De Maineville) was sent by sea with secret instructions to plan a fresh

[1] State Papers, Domestic.
[2] Mary to Beton, 18th November 1582 (Spanish State Papers).
[3] Harl. MSS., 5397.

rising of the Catholic nobles in union with James. Castelnau, the regular Ambassador, might protest untruly to Elizabeth, as he did, that it was "une chose du tout contraire à la verité de dire que le Sieur De Maineville eut une seconde et particulière secrete instruction;" but the embassy was quite terrifying enough to Elizabeth, coming after the plots that she knew had been hatching between the Spaniards, the Jesuits, and D'Aubigny. Walsingham hurried from his country house to court the moment he heard of La Mothe Fénélon's arrival, for all the official French plans for helping James and D'Aubigny had purposely been allowed to leak out. We know now that they were merely a trick of the Queen-mother's to frighten Elizabeth into helping poor Alençon in the Netherlands, the only really serious part of them being De Maineville's secret mission, which depended entirely upon Guise.[1] The Queen kept La Mothe dallying for weeks before she would give him a passport, whilst she tried to dazzle him anew with the talk of marrying Alençon and supporting him in Flanders. Before he left for Scotland, D'Aubigny had passed through London on his way to France, where he died shortly afterwards; and when La Mothe proceeded on his mission it was already too late, if ever it was intended to be effectual.

It is one of the standing reproaches to Lord Burghley's memory that he was the constant enemy of Mary. In former chapters I have shown that this was not the case. That he was inflexible in tracing and punishing treason against his mistress and her Government is obvious, for it was his first duty as a minister; but how far he was from any personal enmity against the unfortunate Mary,

[1] Full particulars of De Maineville's and La Mothe Fénélon's missions in M. Chéruel's *Marie Stuart et Catherine de Medicis*, drawn from the correspondence of La Mothe Fénélon and the archives of the D'Esneval family.

may be seen in his many letters to Lord Shrewsbury at Hatfield and elsewhere. On the receipt of Mary's imprudent letter to the Queen and the arrival of La Mothe in England, a Council was called to consider the removal of the Queen of Scots from the care of Shrewsbury. Mendoza says that "the Treasurer was greatly opposed to her being removed from the Earl's house, where she had remained for fifteen years, especially as Shrewsbury had not failed fully to carry out his instructions. He said her removal would scandalise the country."[1]

Burghley's relative William Davison, in conjunction with Robert Bowes, was sent to Scotland at the same the time as La Mothe, to dissuade James from acceding to French suggestion of associating his mother with himself in his sovereignty; and Walsingham's brother-in-law, Beale, was deputed to proceed to Sheffield for the purpose of negotiating with Mary with regard to her future.[2] Mary from the first had seen that the interference of Henry III. and his mother was a feint in favour of Alençon, and sent Fontenay to Mendoza whilst Beale was with her, to ask for his guidance in the negotiation.[3] Elizabeth had secretly authorised Beale, under certain circumstances, to offer Mary her release. This, Mendoza understood, was unfavourable to Spanish ends, because she would almost infallibly fall in such case into the hands of the French, or be compelled, if she stayed in England, to make such renunciations and compromises as would render her useless as an instrument with which to raise the Catholics. The Spaniard therefore naturally advised her to stay where she was, and the unhappy woman followed his interested advice. She gave Beale

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

[2] See Beale's instructions, Harl. MSS., 4663; also Beale's report of his proceedings in Lord Calthorpe's MSS.

[3] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

a somewhat unyielding answer, and her last chance of liberation fled.[1]

In the meanwhile Alençon continued to clamour for money, and repeated his vows of everlasting love and slavish submission; anything if Elizabeth would only send money to save him from becoming the laughing-stock of Europe. The Protestant Dutchmen were tired of him; Orange saw that he was a useless burden, and prayed Elizabeth to take her bad bargain back again. Seeing that he could expect but little from England, he obtained the help of his mother. Marshal Biron crossed the frontier into Flanders, and in January 1583 the false Valois endeavoured to seize and garrison with Frenchmen the strong places of the Netherlands. The affair failed, and Alençon fled from Antwerp detested and distrusted. The States disowned him, and Norris, the English general, refused to obey him; and though Elizabeth pretended to be angry with Sir John Norris and the Englishmen, she thought better of it when Alençon asked her to withdraw them and let his Frenchmen deal with the Flemings, for it was now clear that she could never trust him in Flanders alone.

With the invidious position into which Elizabeth's tortuous policy had led her; almost hopeless as she was now of conciliating Spain, and conscious of having insulted France beyond forgiveness by her treatment of Alençon; with Orange discontented, and Scotland in a ferment, it is not strange that division existed in the Queen's counsels. Burghley himself at this time was tired of the struggle. The fresh Councillors had not been appointed,

[1] This is according to Beale's official report. But on the following day (17th April 1583) Beale wrote to Lord Burghley (Harl. MSS., 4663), saying that she had abandoned all ambition, she was old and ill, and was ready to swear to anything for her liberation. This, however, was before she received Mendoza's letter (6th May?) advising her on no account to accept her release (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth).

and he had to contend with infinite diplomacy for every point that he carried. The general tendency of the Queen's policy was opposed to his view of what was wise; he was now old and almost constantly ill, and either the Queen's obduracy with regard to his unworthy son-in-law Oxford, or the opposition he constantly met with, led him to seek release from his offices, and to desire to pass the rest of his life in retirement. His complaint would rather seem to have been against the Queen herself, to judge from her very curious letter turning his desire to ridicule. On the 8th May 1583 she wrote :—

"Sir Spirit,[1] I doubt I do nickname you, for those of your kind, they say, have no sense. But I have of late seen an '*Ecce Signum*,' that if an ass kick you, you feel it so soon. I will recant you from being a spirit if ever I perceive you disdain not such a feeling. Serve God, fear the King, and be a good fellow to the rest. Let never care appear in you for such a rumour; but let them well know that you rather desire the righting of such a wrong by making known their error, than you be so silly a soul as to foreslow that you ought to do, or not freely deliver what you think meetest, and pass of no man so much, as not to regard her trust who putteth it in you. God bless you, and long may you last *omnino*. E. R."[2]

The duplicity of the young King of Scots and the intrigues of the Guisan envoy were successful in June in withdrawing James from the power of the lords of the English faction, and once more the Scottish Catholics

[1] The Queen had nicknames for most of her friends; Burghley was the Leviathan or the Spirit, Hatton was Bellwether or Lyddes, Walsingham was Moon, Alençon was Frog, Simier was Ape, Ralegh was Water, Leicester was Sweet Robin, and so forth.

[2] Printed in Dr. Nares' Life of Burghley.

held up their heads.[1] Thus encouraged, Mary at once informed Elizabeth that the conditional promises she had made to Beale and Mildmay in the negotiations for her release, were to be considered void unless she were at once liberated,[2] her attitude being no doubt to some extent the result of the strenuous efforts of the Spaniards through Mendoza to keep her in England, and to prevent her from entering into any compromise as to religion.

This new phase of affairs profoundly disquieted Elizabeth.[3] Her Ambassador in France, Henry Cobham, continued to send alarming news of Guise's designs,[4] and it is certain that Walsingham, at all events, was aware of the constant communications between Mary and Mendoza. It was therefore decided to send Walsingham himself to Edinburgh, to obtain from James some assurance that English interests should not suffer by his change of ministers, and to offer him a subsidy in consideration of his acceptance of the terms proposed by Elizabeth. That the mission was an unwelcome one to Walsingham, who foresaw its failure, is proved by Mendoza's statement (19th August): "He strenuously refused to go, and went so far as to throw himself at the Queen's

[1] See letter from a Scottish gentleman to De Maineville, 13th July (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth), and Mary to Mendoza, of same date (*ibid.*).

[2] See letter of Castelnau to Henry III., 1st July; *in extenso* in Chéruel's *Marie Stuart*. How completely Mary distrusted the French and Castelnau at the time, notwithstanding her cordial letters to them, may be seen by a paragraph in her letter to Mendoza of 13th July (Spanish State Papers). The recognition of James as King by La Mothe's embassy had confirmed Mary's determination to depend only upon the Spaniards.

[3] One of Elizabeth's movements as soon as she heard the news was to summon Lord Arbroath, the eldest of the Hamiltons, from France, to proceed to Scotland in her pay. See letter, Mary to Castelnau, September (Hatfield Papers), and Mendoza to the King, 19th August (Spanish State Papers).

[4] Guise sent Persons (alias Melino) to the Pope in August, giving him an account of his plans. Four thousand Spaniards were to land at Dalton-in-Furness, Lancashire, whilst Guise made a descent on Sussex, simultaneously with a rising of Catholics in the North of England and on the Scottish Border (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, 22nd August).

feet, and pronounce the following terrible blasphemy: he swore by the soul, body, and blood of God, that he would not go to Scotland, even if she ordered him to be hanged for it, as he would rather be hanged in England than elsewhere. . . . Walsingham says that he saw that no good could come of the mission, and that the Queen would lay upon his shoulders the whole of the responsibility for the evils that would occur. He said she was very stingy already, and the Scots more greedy than ever, quite disillusioned now as to the promises made to them; so that it was impossible that any good should be done."[1] But Walsingham went nevertheless, and came home safely, though, as he foretold, his embassy was fruitless, for the Catholics had entirely captured James.

Alençon, in despair of obtaining sufficient help from Elizabeth, now that he had shown his falseness, had retired to France, leaving his forces under Marshal Biron. Lovelorn epistles and frantic protestations continued to pass between him and Elizabeth; but it was acknowledged now that his cause was hopeless, and he fell henceforward entirely under the influence of his mother. The States and Orange again and again urged Elizabeth to take the provinces into her own hands and carry on the war openly. Leicester, Walsingham, Bedford, Knollys, and the Puritans urged her seriously to do so; but she refused on the advice of Burghley,

[1] Walsingham's disinclination to undertake the mission is quite comprehensible. He was at the time engaged in a complicated intrigue with the triple traitor Archibald Douglas, by which he learnt the secrets of Mary Stuart; and at the same time he and Leicester were making approaches to Mary Stuart and James, for a marriage between the latter and Lady Dorothy Devereux, the step-daughter of Leicester, on condition of James being declared the heir of England. See letters from Mary to Castelnau, September 1583 (Hatfield Papers, part iii.), and Mendoza to the King, 13th March 1583 (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth); also Castelnau to Henry, 1st January 1584 (Harl. MSS., 1582), and the same to Mary (Harl. MSS., 387). The heads of Walsingham's instructions are in Hatfield Papers, part iii.

"who told her that she had not sufficient strength to struggle with your Majesty, particularly with so small a contribution as that offered by the States. Leicester and the rest of them are trying to persuade her to send five or six thousand men thither."[1]

Events were irresistibly nearing a crisis which made it necessary for Elizabeth to take an open course on one side or the other; and Lord Burghley had again been overborne by the zealous Protestants in the Council until a breach with Spain had become unavoidable sooner or later. Walsingham had never lost touch of Mary Stuart's proceedings,[2] or of her French cousin's various plans for the murder of Elizabeth, and the invasion of England. Guise had submitted to Philip in 1583 a regular proposal for the Queen's assassination, and in the autumn had sent his pensioner Charles Paget (Mopo) to England to negotiate for the rising of the English Catholics. One of the results of this was that young Francis Throgmorton, a correspondent of Mary Stuart, and one of her intermediaries with Mendoza, was arrested with others and charged with

[1] Mendoza to the King, 19th August (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth).

[2] Many of her compromising letters to Mendoza were intercepted and read. Mary herself, writing to Elizabeth from Tutbury (29th September 1584), thanking her for her change of lodging, protests against the stoppage of her correspondence with the French Ambassador Castelnau. "All that I write," she says, "passes through the hands of your people, who see, read, examine, and keep back in order to point out to me any fault if they find in it anything offensive or injurious to you" (Harl. MSS., 4651). This was more true than Mary thought when she wrote it, for she had no idea that some of her more compromising letters to the Spaniards were read. A letter from Mary to Sir Francis Englefield, Philip's English Secretary (9th October 1584), contains the following dangerous words: "Of the treaty between the Queen of England and me I may neither hope nor look for good issue. Whatsoever shall come of me, by whatsoever change of my state and condition, let the execution of the great plot go forward without any respect of peril or danger to me." And she continues by saying that the plan (*i.e.* the rising and invasion) must take place at latest next spring or the cause will be ruined.

a plot to assassinate the Queen. How far this accusation was true it is at this moment difficult to say, but there is no doubt that the Throgmortons, with the Earl of Northumberland, who was imprisoned, Lord Paget, who fled, and many other Catholics, were in league with Charles Paget for a rising, in conjunction with Guise.

It is to be noted that Lord Burghley took no part in the prosecution of Throgmorton, which was mainly forwarded by Leicester, who was always suspected of having poisoned Sir Nicholas Throgmorton, the uncle of the accused man. The apprehension of the conspirators and the consequent expulsion of Mendoza (January 1584) certainly served the purposes of the strong Protestant majority led by Leicester[1] and Walsingham in the Council, and aided them in forcing the hands of the Queen and Burghley. The death of Alençon in June, and the murder of Orange by an agent of the Spaniards in July, still further acted in the same direction. It was no longer possible for England to hold a non-committal position. Either Spain must be permitted to crush Protestantism in the Netherlands, or the head of the Protestant confederacy must cast aside the mask and boldly fight the Catholic powers. There were reasons why this course might now be taken with much more safety than previously. The Queen-mother of France was frantic with rage against Spain for the loss of her favourite son. The King was childless, and the Guises were already plotting to grasp the crown,

[1] There are several reasons for believing that the prosecution of Somerville, the Ardens, Throgmorton, and others, was not entirely honest on the part of Leicester. Somerville was obviously a madman, and was strangled in his cell; the estates of Arden, whose wife was a Throgmorton, went to enrich a creature of Leicester; and the priest, Hall, on whose evidence the prisoners were condemned, was quietly smuggled out of the country by Leicester's favour. Although it is possible that Throgmorton may have participated in Guise's murder plot—he certainly did in the invasion plot—there is no satisfactory evidence to prove it.

or partition France on Henry's death, rather than he should be succeeded by the Huguenot Henry of Navarre. Elizabeth had therefore the certainty, for the first time since her accession, that France nationally would not coalesce with Spain against her, and that any attempt of Guise to injure her would be counteracted by Catharine, Navarre and the Huguenots.

The question of the future policy to be pursued by England under the changed circumstances was, as usual, submitted to the judicial examination of Lord Burghley, whose minutes[1] set forth the whole case *pro* and *contra*. The question propounded was, "Shall the Queen defend and help the Low Countries to recover from the tyranny of Spain and the Inquisition; and if not, what shall she do to protect England when he shall have subdued Holland?" After stating the advantages and disadvantages of each course, it is evident that the judgment is in favour of aiding the States, on certain conditions of security, which Burghley himself notes in the margin. The aid is to cost as little as possible; some of the best noblemen of Zeeland are to be held as hostages in the hands of the English; the chief military commands to be held by English officers; the King of Scots to be secured to the English interest; the King of Navarre to embarrass Spain on her frontiers, and a Parliament to be called in England for the purpose of sanctioning the course proposed. But, continues the document, if it is decided that England shall not help the States, then she must be put into a condition of defence, the navy increased, a large sum of money collected, some German mercenaries engaged to watch the Scottish Border, and the English Catholics "put in surety." "Finally, that ought to be Alpha and Omega, to cause her people to be better taught to serve God, and to see justice duly

[1] Hatfield State Papers, part iii.

administered, whereby they may serve God, and love her Majesty; and that if it may be concluded, *Si Deus nobiscum, quis contra nos?*"

Lord Burghley was thus, after a quarter of a century of striving to keep on friendly relations with Spain, forced by the policy of Leicester, Walsingham, and the strong Protestants, into the contest which he had hoped to avoid. Circumstances had been stronger than individual predilections, and Mary Stuart's ceaseless designs against the crown and faith of England, and especially her submission to Spain, had given the Protestant party an impetus which swept aside the cautious moderation of Burghley's policy, and proved even to him the necessity for war.

CHAPTER XIV

1584–1587

THE militant Protestants were now paramount in Elizabeth's Council, and soon made their influence felt, not only in foreign relations, but in home affairs as well. They were in favour of an aggressive policy in aid of Protestantism abroad, and doubtless thought that the best way to strengthen their hands would be to strike at Prelacy at home, and to discredit the last vestiges of the old faith, against the foreign champions of which they were ready to do national battle.

The appointment of Whitgift to the Archbishopric of Canterbury had been avowedly made by the Queen (September 1583) for the purpose of repairing the effects of Grindal's leniency, and bringing the Nonconformists to obedience; "to hold a strait rein, to press the discipline of his Church, and recover his province to uniformity." He had set about his work with a thoroughness which brought upon him a storm of reproach from ministers, and greatly embittered the controversies within the Church.[1] Burghley felt strongly on the question of uniformity, as involving obedience to the law; but Whit-

[1] How keenly Whitgift felt the attacks upon him for doing what he conceived to be his duty, may be seen by his letters in Strype's Whitgift. In a letter to Anthony Bacon (Birch's Elizabeth) he writes: "I am, thank God, exercised with like calumnies at home also; but I comfort myself that lies and false rumours cannot long prevail. In matters of religion I remain the same, and so intend to do by God's grace during life; wherein I am daily more and more confirmed by the uncharitable and indirect practices, as well by the common adversary the Papist, as also of some of our wayward, unquiet, and discontented brethren."

gift's methods were too severe even for him, and produced from him more than one rebuke. He was the referee of all parties—Puritans, Churchmen, and Catholics appealed to him as their friend—and he strove to hold the balance fairly, whilst deprecating extreme views on each side. Leicester and Knollys were ceaseless in the attacks upon the prelates, and Whitgift's violence made it difficult for Burghley to defend him. In one of his letters to the Archbishop he says, "I am sorry to trouble your Grace, but I am more troubled myself, not only with many private petitions of ministers recommended by persons of credit as being peaceable persons in their ministry, but yet more with complaints to your Grace and colleagues, greatly troubled; but also I am now daily charged by Councillors and public persons to neglect my duty in not staying your Grace's proceedings, so vehement and general against ministers and preachers, as the Papists are thereby encouraged, and ill-disposed subjects animated, and her Majesty's safety endangered."

Now that the Puritan party had the upper hand, Burghley's proverbial middle course was not strong enough for his colleagues, and they determined to deal with Prelacy and Papacy at the same time. The first thing was to pack the new Parliament, and in this Leicester laboured unblushingly. Sir Simon D'Ewes' Journal sets forth the great number of blank proxies sent to the Earl; and if his letter to the electors of Andover is typical, this is not to be wondered at. He boldly asks them to send him "your election in blank, and I will put in the names." Another letter from the Privy Council to Lord Cobham[1] directs him to obtain the nomination of all the members for the Cinque Ports. Parliament met at the end of November, and a formal complaint of the Puritan and Nonconformist ministers was presented to

[1] Hatfield State Papers, part iii.

the House of Commons, which, after reducing the number of its articles from thirty-four to sixteen, it adopted and laid before the House of Lords. Whitgift and his colleagues fought hard, cautiously aided by Burghley and the Queen, who, when she afterwards dismissed Parliament, roundly scolded the members for interfering with her religious prerogative; and the only effect of the complaints was to enable Burghley to exert pressure upon the prelates to allay their zeal.

The attack of the militant Protestants against the Catholics, however, was more effectual, although even that was somewhat palliated by Lord Burghley's moderation. It was evident now that the Catholic League abroad and its instruments would stick at nothing. Father Creighton, the priest who had played so prominent a part in the abortive plans of D'Aubigny, Mendoza, and the Jesuits, had been captured with some of his brother seminarists, and the rack had torn from them confirmation of the desperate plans of which the Throgmorton conspiracy had given an inkling. Leicester and his party had aroused Protestant horror of such projects to fever heat. At his instance an association had been formed, pledged by oath to defend the Queen's life or to avenge it, and to exclude for ever from the throne any person who might benefit by the Queen's removal. Mary Stuart somewhat naturally regarded the last clause as directed against herself, and endeavoured to take the sting from it by offering her own qualified adhesion to the association, which, however, was declined.

When the association was legalised by a bill in Parliament, the Queen (Elizabeth), under Burghley's influence, sent a message to the House, abating some of the objectionable features, and reconciling it with the rules of English equity. No penalties were to accrue before the persons accused had been found guilty by a regular

commission, and Mary and her heirs were excused from forfeiture, unless Elizabeth were assassinated.

The new bill against Catholics was easily passed, under feelings such as those prevailing in the House and the country, and the enactment was regarded as a natural retort to the promulgation of the Papal bulls in favour of revolution in England. All native Jesuits and seminarists found in England after forty days were to be treated as traitors, and it was felony to shelter or harbour them. English students or priests abroad were to be forced to return within six months and take the oath of supremacy, or incur the penalty for high treason; and many similar provisions were made, by which the world could see that the militant Protestants of England had picked up the gage thrown down by Philip and the Pope. Henceforward it was to be war to the knife until one side or the other was vanquished, and Lord Burghley's astute policy of balance and compromise was cast into the background after a quarter of a century of almost unbroken success.[1]

Almost the only dissenting voice in the House of Commons against the penal bill was that of Dr. William Parry, member for Queenborough. In a violent and abusive speech, he said that the House was so evidently biassed that it was useless to give it the special reasons he had for opposing the bill, but would state them to the Queen alone. This was considered insulting to the House, and he was committed to the charge of the sergeant-at-arms, but was released by the Queen and Council the following day. The events which followed form one of the unsolved riddles of history. Parry was a man of bad

[1] Even whilst the bill was passing through Parliament, however, the effects of his moderation were seen. In March twenty Catholic priests and one layman, either convicted or accused of treason, were released from prison and sent to France. Father Howard himself told Mendoza that he was at a loss to account for this leniency.

character, who for years had been one of Burghley's many spies upon the English refugees on the Continent. He appears, however, to have been esteemed more highly by the Treasurer than such instruments usually are.

When young Anthony Bacon was sent on his travels to France, his uncle, Burghley, specially instructed him to cultivate the acquaintance of Dr. Parry. Leicester complained to the Queen of this, and the Lord Treasurer undertook that his nephew should not be shaken either in loyalty or religion by his acquaintanceship with Parry.[1] After the latter returned to England in 1583 he was elected member of the Parliament of the following year, after having persistently but unsuccessfully begged a sinecure office from Burghley. From his first arrival he had been full of real or pretended plots for the assassination of the Queen, which he professed to have discovered on the Continent. He was, like all men of his profession, an unprincipled scamp, and made these secret disclosures the ground for ceaseless demands for reward. He was disappointed and discontented, as well as vain and boastful, and overshot the mark. In one of his interviews with the Queen he produced a somewhat doubtfully worded letter of approval from the Papal Secretary of State, Cardinal Como,[2] which, he said, referred to a pretended project undertaken by him (Parry) for the murder of the Queen. He talked loosely to Charles Neville and other Catholics of this plot as a real one, and six weeks

[1] He certainly was not benefited in purse; for one of the first things Parry did was to borrow fifty crowns of the young man, which he never returned (Birch's Elizabeth). In the correspondence of Sir Thomas Copley with Burghley at this period (1579–80), Parry is presented in a more favourable light than that in which he is usually regarded, and so far as can be judged by his letters he retained the Lord Treasurer's esteem almost to the time of his arrest.

[2] Mendoza, writing to Philip from Paris at the time, says that this letter was forged (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth), but in any case the letter did not necessarily imply approval of murder.

after his escapade in Parliament was arrested and lodged in jail. At first he would admit nothing, but the fear of the rack, or some other motive, produced from him a full and complete confession of a regular plan—once, he said, nearly executed—for killing Elizabeth; but before sentence he vehemently retracted, and appealed to the knowledge of the Queen, Burghley, and Walsingham that he was innocent. But if they possessed this knowledge they never revealed it, and Parry died the revolting death of a traitor, clamouring to the last that Elizabeth herself was responsible for his sacrifice.

It cannot be doubted that Parry was an *agent provocateur*, and great question arises as to the reality of the crime for which he was punished. I have found no trace in the Spanish correspondence of his having been a tool of Mendoza or Philip, such as exists in the cases of Throgmorton, Babington, and others; and I consider that the evidence generally favours the idea that he was deliberately caught in his own lure, and sacrificed in order to aggravate the anti-Catholic fervour in the country, and secure the passage of the penal enactments. In one particular I dissent from nearly every historian who has written on the subject. All fingers point at Lord Burghley as the author of the plan. I look upon it as being the work of Leicester, Knollys, and Walsingham. It was they, and not Burghley, who were anxious to strengthen the fervent Protestant party. It was they, and not Burghley, who were forcing the penal enactments through the Parliament they had packed. The Treasurer could hardly have been blind to what was going on, but he could not afford to champion Parry. The latter, a venal scoundrel known to be in Burghley's pay, but discontented with his patron, was doubtless bought by Leicester to play his part in Parliament, and afterwards to confess the Catholic plot on

the assurance of pardon, with the object of blackening the Catholics, and perhaps, by implication, Burghley as well.

That Leicester's friends were at the time seeking to represent the Lord Treasurer as against the Protestant cause is clear from several indignant letters written by Burghley himself. "If they cannot," he says, "prove all their lies, let them make use of any *one* proof wherewith to prove me guilty of falsehood, injustice, bribery or dissimulation or double-dealing in Council, either with her Majesty or with her Councillors. Let them charge me on *any* point that I have not dealt as earnestly with the Queen to aid the afflicted in the Low Countries to withstand the increasing power of the King of Spain, the assurance of the King of Scots to be tied to her Majesty with reward, yea, with the greatest pension that any other hath. If in any of these I am proved to be behind or slower than any in a discreet manner, I will yield myself worthy of perpetual reproach as though I were guilty of all they use to bluster against me. They that say in rash and malicious mockery that England is become *Regnum Cecilianum* may use their own cankered humour." In July of the same year he writes in similar strain to Sir Thomas Edmunds:[1] "If you knew how earnest a course I hold with her Majesty, both privately and openly, for her to retain the King of Scots with friendship and liberality, yea, and to retain the Master of Gray and Justice-Clerk, with rewards to continue their offices, which indeed are well known to me to be very good, you would think there could be no more shameful lies made by Satan himself than these be; and finding myself thus maliciously bitten with the tongues and pens of courtiers here, if God did not comfort me, I had cause to fear murdering hands or poisoning points; but God is my keeper."

[1] Hatfield Papers, part iii.

The more or less hollow negotiations for the liberation of Mary, and for the association of her son with herself in her sovereign rights, had dragged on intermittently for years. Burghley himself has set forth the reasons for the successive failures;[1] in each case the discovery of some fresh plot in her favour. The serious set of conspiracies brought to light in 1584 had caused her removal from the mild custody of Burghley's friend, Lord Shrewsbury, to that of the rigid Puritan, Sir Amyas Paulet, at Tutbury. In her troubles the captive Queen, like every one else, appealed to Burghley, and especially in the matter of the reckless accusations of immorality brought by the Countess of Shrewsbury and her Cavendish sons against her husband and Mary.[2]

Burghley's kindness in this matter, and his attempts to soften the fresh severity of the Queen's captivity, had not only persuaded Mary's agents that he was her friend,[3] but had given to Leicester and his party an excuse for spreading rumours to the Treasurer's detriment. At an inopportune time, Nau, Mary's French secretary, had gone to London with new plans of associated sovereignty; but almost simultaneously the Master of Gray had arrived as James's Ambassador. He was easily bought by the English Government, as we have seen, with the full approval of Burghley;[4] and on his return to Scotland promptly caused the rejection by the Lords of Nau's project in favour of Mary. It was never on the question of securing the Scots by bribery to the English interest that Burghley was remiss. It was open war with Spain that he always opposed.

In the meanwhile the toils were closing round the un-

[1] Harl. MSS., 4651.

[2] Hatfield Papers, part iii.

[3] See letter (Nau?) to Mary (Hatfield Papers, part iii. p. 125).

[4] See letter from Burghley's nephew Hoby, at Berwick, to the Treasurer (Hatfield Papers, part iii. p. 71).

happy Mary. She had now thrown herself entirely into the arms of Spain; and the Guises were being gradually but steadily forced into the background by Philip, as being likely to frustrate his plans, by claiming for their kinsman, James Stuart, the succession of England after his mother. Every letter to and from Tutbury was intercepted by Paulet. Morgan, Charles Paget, Robert Bruce, and others, in their communications with Mary, laid bare her hopes and their intrigues.[1] If any doubts had previously existed as to the intentions of Spain and the Queen of Scots, they could exist no longer. The only question for England was how best to withstand the combination against her. Here, as usual, Burghley was at issue with the now dominant party of militant Protestants; and equally, as usual, his opposition was cautious and indirect. Leicester and his friends were for open operations against Spain both in the Netherlands and on the high seas, and for helping Henry III. to withstand the Guises; whilst the Treasurer preferred to stand on the defensive, and keep as much money in hand as possible.[2] Elizabeth rarely required urging to parsimony, and by appealing to her weakness Burghley was able for a time to moderate the plans of the other party.

But events were too strong for him. Mainly by his influence Leicester had been restrained since 1580 from subsidising a great expedition against Philip in favour of the Portuguese Pretender, Don Antonio; but in the spring of 1585 the treacherous seizure of English ships in Spain had aroused the English to fury. Drake's great expedition of twenty-nine ships was fitted out, and general reprisals authorised. Never was an expedi-

[1] Hatfield State Papers, part iii.

[2] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, part iii. p. 536; and Hatfield Papers, part iii. p. 99.

tion more popular than this, for the English sailors were aching for a fight with foes they knew they could beat, and Burghley's cautions were scouted. Drake's fleet sailed in September, doubtful to the last moment whether the Queen would not be prevailed upon to stay it;[1] and by sacking Santo Domingo and ravaging Santiago and Cartagena almost without hindrance, demonstrated the ineffective clumsiness of Philip's methods. Leicester and the war-party were now almost unrestrained; for the Lord Treasurer made the best of it, and confined his efforts to minimising the cost of the new policy as much as possible, and suggesting caution to the Queen.

The Commissioners from the States continued to urge the Queen to assume the sovereignty of the Netherlands, and to govern the country, either directly or through a nominee; but this was a responsibility which neither she nor Burghley cared to accept. At length, after much hesitation on the part of the Queen, Sir John Norris was sent with an English force of 5000 men to take possession of the strong cautionary places offered by the Hollanders, and Leicester was designated to follow as Lieutenant-General of the Queen's forces (September 1585).

Elizabeth approached the business with fear and trembling. It was a departure from Burghley's safe and tried policy, and was involving her in large expenditure. She distrusted rebels and popular governments; she did not like to send away her best troops in a time of danger, and she railed often and loudly at Leicester and Walsingham for dragging her into such a pass. Only a day after Leicester's appointment she changed her mind and bade him suspend his preparations. "Her pleasure is," wrote Walsingham, "that you proceed no further until you speak with her. How this cometh about I know not.

[1] Carliell to Walsingham, 4th October 1585 (State Papers, Domestic).

The matter is to be kept secret. These changes here may work some such changes in the Low Countries as may prove irreparable. God give her Majesty another mind, . . . or it will work both hers and her best affected subjects' ruin."[1] To this Leicester wrote one letter of submission to be shown to the Queen, and the other for Walsingham's own eye, full of indignation. "This," he says, "is the strangest dealing in the world. . . . What must be thought of such an alteration? I am weary of life and all."

Elizabeth had, however, gone too far now to retire, and Leicester's journey went forward. But it is plain to see that whilst he was making his preparations to act as sovereign on his own account, the Queen, influenced by Burghley, was drafting his instructions in a way that strictly limited his power for harm, and minimised her responsibility towards Spain. Leicester was directed to "let the States understand that whereby their Commissioners made offer unto her Majesty, first of the sovereignty of those countries, which for sundry respects she did not accept; secondly, under her protection to be governed absolutely by such as her Majesty would appoint and send over as her Lieutenant. That her Majesty, although she would not take so much upon her as to command them in such absolute sort, yet unless they should show themselves forward to use the advice of her Majesty . . . she would think her favours unworthily bestowed upon them."

This must have been gall and wormwood for Leicester, for in his own notes he lays down as his guiding principles, "First, that he have as much authoryte as the Prince of Orange had; or any other Captain-General hath had heretofore: second, that there be as much allowance by the States for the said Governor as the

[1] Cotton, Galba, cviii. (Leycester Correspondence).

Prince had, with all offices apportenaunt."[1] He had infinite trouble in getting money from the Queen, and went so far as to offer to pledge his own lands to her as security; but at last, in December, all was ready, and Leicester foolishly went to Holland with his vague ambitions, leaving Burghley in possession at home. It is plain from his beseeching letter of farewell to the Lord Treasurer that he recognised the danger. He prays him earnestly not to have any change made in the plans agreed upon, and to provide sufficient resources for the sake of the cause involved and for the Queen's honour. "Hir Majesty, I se, my lord, often tymes doth fall into myslyke of this cause, and sondry opinions yt may brede in hir withal, but I trust in the Lord, seeing hir Highness hath thus far resolved, and gone also to this far executyon as she hath, and that myne and other menne's poor lives are adventured for hir sake, that she will fortify and mainteyn her own action to the full performance that she hath agreed on."[2] Burghley was very ill at the time, unable to rise from his couch, but in answer to the Earl's appeal he assured him that he would consider himself "accursed in the sight of God" if he did not strive earnestly to promote the success of the expedition.

The Lord Treasurer was, of course, sincere in his desire to prevent the collapse of the Protestant cause in the Netherlands, for he had never ceased for years to insist that the quietude of England mainly depended upon it. Where he differed from Leicester was in his determination, if possible, to avoid such action as would lead to an open breach with Spain. Before even Leicester landed at Flushing he had begun to quarrel with the Dutchmen, and in a fortnight was intriguing to obtain an offer of the sovereignty of the

[1] Harl. MSS., 285 (Leycester Correspondence).
[2] Harl. MSS., 6993 (Leycester Correspondence).

States for himself. The offer was made, and modestly refused at first; but on further pressure Leicester accepted the sovereignty, as he had intended to do from the first (January 1586). The rage of Elizabeth knew no bounds. This would make her infamous, she said, to all the world. Leicester was timid at the consequences of the step he had taken, and made matters worse by delaying for weeks to write explanations to the angry Queen. Walsingham and Hatton did their best, but very ineffectually, to appease her. Burghley in a letter to Leicester (7th February) assured him that he too had done so, and that he himself approved of his action, and hoped to "move her Majesty to alter her hard opinion." As we have seen, Burghley's opposition was seldom direct, and it may be accepted as probable that he mildly deprecated the Queen's anger against her favourite; but a remark in a letter (17th February) from Davison, who was sent by Leicester to explain and extenuate his act to the Queen,[1] seems to show that the Lord Treasurer's advocacy had not been so earnest as he would have had Leicester to believe.

The Queen had ordered Heneage to go to Holland post-haste, to command Leicester openly to abandon his new title; but from the 7th February till the 14th, whilst Heneage's harsh instructions were being drafted, Burghley was diplomatically absent from court, and the pleading of Walsingham and Hatton had no softening effect upon the Queen. On the 13th February, Davison at length

[1] The unfortunate Davison, born apparently to be made a scapegoat, had to bear Leicester's reproaches for the Queen's anger, which the Earl said was owing to Davison's ineffective or insincere advocacy—Davison being a distant connection both of Burghley's and Leicester's. The latter even had the meanness to allege that it was mainly owing to Davison's persuasion that he accepted the sovereignty, and Davison was disgraced and banished from court for a time in consequence. See Sir Philip Sidney's letters to Davison (Harl. MSS., 285).

arrived with Leicester's excuses. The Queen railed and stormed until he was reduced to tears. She refused at first to receive Leicester's letter or to delay Heneage's departure. Burghley arrived the next day, and Davison writes on the 17th that he "*had successfully exerted himself to convince the Lord Treasurer that the measures adopted were necessary*, and that his Lordship had urged the Queen on the subject."

The only effect of Burghley's persuasion, however, was to obtain for Heneage discretion to withhold, if he considered necessary, the Queen's letter to the States, and to save Leicester from the degradation of a public renunciation. Burghley had thus done his best to preserve Leicester's friendship and gratitude; but, after all, it was his policy, and not that of Leicester, that was triumphant. Heneage was a friend of the Earl's, and on his arrival in Holland delayed action; but the Queen was not to be appeased. She had, she said, been slighted, and her commission exceeded, and would send no money till her instructions were fulfilled. Confusion and danger naturally resulted, and Leicester's friends redoubled their efforts to save him. Burghley himself assured Leicester (31st March) that he had threatened to resign his office unless she changed her course. "I used boldly such language in this matter, as I found her doubtful whether to charge me with presumption, which partly she did, or with some astonishment of my round speech, which truly was no other than my conscience did move me, even in *amaritudine anima*. And then her Majesty began to be more calm than before, and, as I conceived, readier to qualify her displeasure."[1]

When the Queen saw that Heneage and Leicester were construing her leniency into acquiescence of the Earl's action, she blazed out again; and when Burghley

[1] Cotton, Galba, cx. (Leycester Correspondence).

begged her to allow Heneage to return and explain the circumstances, "she grew so passionate in the matter that she forbade me to argue more;" and herself wrote a letter to Heneage containing these words: "Do as you are bidden, and leave your considerations for your own affairs; for in some things you had clear commandment, which you did not do, and in others none, which you did." At the urgent prayer of the States, however, representing the danger to the cause which a public deposition of Leicester would bring about, the Queen finally allowed matters to rest until they could devise some harmless way out of the difficulty.

Throughout the whole business Burghley almost ostentatiously acted the part of Leicester's friend. It was a safe course for him to take, for the Queen was so angry that he could keep the good-will of Leicester and the Protestants, and yet be certain of the ultimate failure of his opponent. As soon as the States understood Leicester's position, and had realised his incompetence, they were only too anxious to be rid of him; and throughout his inglorious government Burghley could well speak in his favour, for it must have been evident that the Earl was working his own ruin, and that his position was untenable. One curious feature in the matter is that both Burghley and Walsingham hinted to Leicester that the Queen was being influenced by some one underhand. "Surely," writes the Secretary, "there is some treachery amongst ourselves, for I cannot think she would do this out of her own head;" and the gossip of the court pointed at Ralegh, who wrote to Leicester[1] vigorously protesting against the calumny.

There were, however, wheels within wheels in Elizabeth's court. Two of her Councillors were Spanish spies, Ralegh was Burghley's partisan, the Conservative party

[1] Harl. MSS., 6994 (Edwards' "Letters of Ralegh").

in favour of friendship with the House of Burgundy was not dead, and, notwithstanding all that has been written, it may be fairly assumed that the decadence of Leicester and the militant Protestant party during the Earl's absence in Holland did not take place without some secret prompting from Lord Burghley.

In the meanwhile the plans for the invasion of England were gradually maturing in Philip's slow mind. The raid of Drake's fleet upon his colonies, and Leicester's assumption of the sovereignty of the Netherlands, had at last convinced Philip, after nearly thirty years of hesitancy, that England must be coerced into Catholicism, or Spain must descend from its high estate. So long as the elevation of Mary Stuart meant a Guisan domination of England, with shifty James as his mother's heir, it had not suited Philip to squander his much needed resources upon the overthrow of Elizabeth; but by this time Guise was pledged to vast ambitions in France, which could only be realised by Philip's help. The Jesuits and English Catholics had persuaded the Spaniard that he would be welcomed in England, whilst a Scot or a Frenchman would be resisted to the death. Most of Mary's agents, too, had been bribed to the same side, and Mendoza in Paris was her prime adviser and mainstay. Various attempts were made by the Scottish Catholics and Guise's friends to manage the subjugation of England over the Scottish Border; but though Philip affected to listen to their approaches, and used them as a diversion, his plan was already fixed—England must be won by Spaniards in Mary's name, and be held thenceforward in Spanish hands. Mary was ready to agree to anything, and at the prompting of Philip's agents she disinherited her son (June 1586) in favour of the King of Spain. Morgan, Paget, and others had at last succeeded in reopening communica-

tion with Mary, who had now lost all hope of release except by force. A close alliance between England and James VI. had been agreed to: she knew that no help would come from her son or his Government; and her many letters to Charles Paget, to Mendoza, and to Philip himself, leave no doubt whatever that she was fully cognisant of the plans for the overthrow, and perhaps murder, of Elizabeth, in order that she, Mary, might be raised by Spanish pikes to the English throne.[1]

In May 1586 the priest Ballard had seen Mendoza in Paris, and had sought the countenance of Spain for the assassination of Elizabeth; and in August the matter had so far progressed as to enable Gifford to give to Mendoza full particulars of the vile plan. There was, according to his account, hardly a Catholic or schismatic gentleman in England who was not in favour of the plot; and though Philip always distrusted a conspiracy known to many, he promised armed help from Flanders if the Queen were killed. Mendoza, when he saw Gifford, recommended that Don Antonio, Burghley, Walsingham, Hunsdon, Knollys, and Beale should be killed; but the King wrote on the margin of the letter, "It does not matter so much about Cecil, although he is a great heretic, but he is very old, and it was he who

[1] Amongst many other proofs may be mentioned her letter to Charles Paget, 27th July 1586 (Hatfield Papers, part iii.), in which she says: "Upon Ballard's return the principal Catholics who had despatched him oversea imparted to her their intentions;" but she advises that "nothing is to be stirred on this side until they have full assurance and promise from the Pope and Spain." In another letter of the same date to Mendoza she says that although she had turned a deaf ear for six months to the various overtures made to her by the Catholics, now that she had heard of the intentions of the King of Spain, she had consented thereto (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, part iii.). Again, on the same day, she instructed the French Ambassador to ask Burghley to be careful in the choice of a new guardian for her, "so that whatever happen, whether it be the death of the Queen of England, or a rebellion in the country, my life may be safe" (Labanoff).

advised the understandings with the Prince of Parma, and he has done no harm. It would be advisable to do as he [*i.e.* Mendoza] says with the others."[1]

The folly of Babington and his friends almost passes belief. They seem to have been prodigal of their confidences, and to have had no apprehension of treachery. Babington's own letter to Mary setting forth in full all the plans in favour of "his dear sovereign" (6th July) was handed immediately by the false agent Gifford to Walsingham. No move was made by Walsingham, except to send the clever clerk Phillips to Chartley to decipher all intercepted letters on the spot, and so to avoid delay in their delivery, which might arouse the suspicion of the conspirators. Surrounded by spies and traitors, but in fancied security, the unhappy Queen involved herself daily deeper in the traps laid for her; approved of Babington's wild plans, and made provision for her own release, whilst Walsingham watched and waited. When the proofs were incontestable, and all in the Secretary's hands, the blow fell. On the 4th August Ballard was arrested, Babington and the intended murderer Savage a day or so afterwards, and Mary Stuart's doom was sealed. She was hurried off temporarily to Tixhall; Nau and Curll were placed under arrest, the Queen's papers seized, and her rooms closely examined. Amias Paulet was a faithful jailer, and he did his work well. "Amyas, my most faithful, careful servant," wrote Elizabeth, "God reward thee treblefold for the most troublesome charge so well discharged. If you knew, my Amyas, how kindly, besides most dutifully, my grateful heart accepts and

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, vol. iii. The reference to Parma applies to certain negotiations for peace which had been attempted by Andrea de Looe, Agostino Graffini, and William Bodenham. In a statement furnished by an English agent to Philip in November, it is also asserted that these negotiations were initiated by Burghley "who was always against the war."

prizes your spotless endeavours and faultless actions, your wise orders and safe regard, performed in so dangerous and crafty a charge, it would ease your travail and rejoice your heart. . . . Let your wicked murderess know how with hearty sorrow her vile deserts compel these orders, and bid her from me ask God's forgiveness for her treacherous dealing." Elizabeth and her ministers rightly appreciated the great peril which she had escaped, and from the first it was recognised by most of them that Mary had forfeited all claim to consideration at their hands.[1]

It is usually assumed by a certain class of writers that Mary was unjustly hounded to her death, mainly by the personal enmity of Lord Burghley. Nothing, in reality, is more distant from the truth. A most dangerous conspiracy against the government and religion of England had been discovered, in which she was a prime mover. Her accomplices rightly suffered the penalty of their crime,[2] and it was due to justice and to the safety of the country that the mainspring of the conspiracy should be disabled for further harm. But still the matter was a delicate and dangerous one, for Catholics were numerous in England, and the great Catholic confederacy abroad was ready to take any advantage which a false step on the part of Elizabeth might give them. As we have seen, moreover, the feelings of the Queen

[1] Mendoza wrote to Philip (8th November): "When Cecil saw the papers (taken in Mary's rooms) he told the Queen that now that she had so great an advantage, if she did not proceed with all rigour at once against the Queen of Scotland, he himself would seek her friendship. These words are worthy of so clever a man as he is, and were intended to lead the other Councillors to follow him in holding the Queen of England back." It is evident from this that Mendoza did not consider Cecil to be Mary's enemy.

[2] Babington, Savage, Ballard, Barnewell, Tylney, Tichbourne, and Abingdon were executed at St. Giles-in-the-Fields on the 20th September. Mendoza says that as Babington's heart was being torn out he was distinctly heard to pronounce the word "Jesus" thrice.

of England herself with regard to the sacredness of anointed sovereigns was strong, and no more difficult problem had ever faced the Government than how to dispose of their troublesome guest in a way that should in future safeguard England from her machinations, whilst respecting the many susceptibilities involved. As usual in moments of difficulty, Elizabeth turned to her aged minister,[1] and as a result of a long private conference with him the question was submitted to the Privy Council. The Catholic members advocated only a further stringency in Mary's imprisonment. Leicester was in favour of solving the difficulty by the aid of poison,[2] whilst Burghley, followed by Walsingham and others, proposed a regular judicial inquiry, which was now legally possible by virtue of the Act of Association passed by Parliament in the previous year. A commission was consequently issued on the 6th October for the trial of Mary, containing the names of forty-six of the principal peers and judges, and all the Councillors, but only after some bickering between the Queen and Burghley with regard to the style to be given to Mary and other details.[3]

Before this point had been reached, however, measures had been taken to test the feeling of foreign powers on the subject. Diplomatic relations had ceased between Spain and England; but as soon as the Babington con-

[1] State Papers, Domestic. [2] Camden.

[3] Davison, who had just been appointed an additional Secretary of State, wrote to Burghley from Windsor (5th October) that the Queen did not like the wording, "Tam per Maria filiam et hæredem Jacobi quinti nuper Scotorū Regis ac communiter vocatam Scotorū Regis et dotare Franciæ." She wished it to be, "Tam per Maria filiam &c. . . . Scotorū Regis et dotare Franciæ *communiter vocata Regina Scotorū.*" Thus it is seen that, although Elizabeth made no difficulty about acknowledging Mary as Queen Dowager of France, she would not recognise her as of right Queen of Scots. Davison adds that she was sending a special messenger to Burghley to discuss the matter with him.

spiracy was discovered, Walsingham impressed upon Chateauneuf, the French Ambassador, that the Spaniards were at the bottom of it, and that it was directed almost as much against the King of France as against Elizabeth herself. The Ambassador himself was a strong Guisan,[1] and personally was an object of odium and suspicion to the excited Londoners; but his master's hatred of the Guises and dread of their objects was growing daily, and when Madame de Montpensier prayed Henry to intercede for the protection of Mary, she obtained but a cold answer;[2] and no official step by the French was taken in her favour at the time, except as a matter of justice Elizabeth was requested that she might have the assistance of counsel. It was clear, therefore, that Henry III. would not go to war for the sake of his sister-in-law.

Mary was removed to Fotheringay for trial on the 6th October, and on the following day Paulet and Mildmay delivered to her Elizabeth's letter, informing her of the charges against her, and the tribunal to which she was to be submitted. She indignantly refused to acknowledge Elizabeth's right to place her, an anointed sovereign, upon her trial; but she denied all knowledge and complicity in the murder plot. This was the safest attitude she could have assumed, although the proofs against her already in the hands of Elizabeth were overwhelming;[3]

[1] He was the secret means of communication between Mendoza and his spies in England.

[2] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

[3] Nau and Curll, the two Secretaries, had been closely examined by Burghley in London, and at first had denied everything, but subsequently when confronted with their own handwriting, were obliged to acknowledge —especially Nau—Mary's cognisance of Babington's plans. Nau afterwards (1605) endeavoured to minimise his admissions, but Mary's letter to Mendoza (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, 23rd November) which was not delivered or opened until long after Mary's death, leaves no doubt whatever that Mary considered he had betrayed her. Curll lived for the rest of his life on a handsome pension from Spain, but Nau got nothing. Mary's first answer to her accusers, that she was a free princess and not subject to Elizabeth's tribunal, had been foreseen by Beale (see his opinion, Harl. MSS., 4646).

and the arguments of Burghley and Lord Chancellor Bromley failed to alter Mary's determination. This was embarrassing, and in the face of it Elizabeth wrote to Burghley[1] instructing him that, although the examination might proceed, no judgment was to be delivered until she had conferred with him. At the same time she wrote to Mary a letter of mingled threats and hope, with the object of changing her attitude towards the tribunal. This, added to the persuasions of Hatton, succeeded in the object,[2] and Mary, unfortunately for her, retreated from her unassailable position.

On the 14th, two days afterwards, the tribunal sat in the great hall of Fotheringay Castle, and Mary, almost crippled with rheumatism, painfully hobbled to her place, supported by her Steward, Sir Andrew Melvil. On the right of the Lord Chancellor sat Lord Burghley. That the proceedings against Mary, in which he had from the first taken an active part, were in his opinion necessary for the safety of England, is clear from his many letters upon the subject; but it is equally evident that if he could decently have avoided personal identification with them he would have been better pleased. His letters to Popham, the Attorney-General, show that he wished to be absent from the trial; but as he wrote at the time to Sir Edward Stafford, the English Ambassador in France, "I was never more toiled than I have been of late, and yet am, with services that here do multiply daily; and whosoever scapeth I am never spared. God give me grace."

Much of the obloquy that has been unjustly cast upon him in the matter of Mary Stuart arises from his inveterate habit of putting everything in writing, which other men did not do. For instance, the draft of the whole case, or, as he puts it, "the indignities and wrongs done and

[1] Queen to Burghley, 12th October (Cotton, Caligula, cix.).
[2] Camden Annals, and Life of Sir Thomas Egerton.

offered by the Queen of Scots to the Queen," is in his handwriting,[1] and the letters to the Queen detailing the progress of events at Fotheringay are sent from him, whilst Elizabeth's instructions through Davison are all addressed to Walsingham and Burghley. But it must be remembered that he was the Queen's most trusted and experienced Councillor, and the existence of records written by or to him does not show that he was more eager than the rest for the sacrifice of the Scottish Queen.

Mary defended herself with consummate ability before a tribunal almost entirely prejudiced against her. She was deprived of legal aid, without her papers, and in ill health; and, according to modern notions, the procedure against her was unjust in the extreme. Once she turned upon Walsingham and denounced him as the contriver of her ruin, but soon regained her composure; and in her argument with Burghley, with respect to the avowals of Babington and her Secretaries, reached a point of touching eloquence which might have moved the hearts, though it did not convince the intellects, of her august judges.[2] But her condemnation was a foregone conclusion; and although the sentence was not pronounced until the return of the Commission to Westminster (October 25), Mary left the hall of Fotheringay practically a condemned felon on the 15th.

But it was one thing to condemn and another thing to execute. Here Elizabeth's scruples again assailed

[1] Hatfield Papers, part iii.

[2] Howell's State Trials. Burghley writes to Davison (15th October, Cotton, Caligula): "She has only denied the accusations. Her intention was to move pity by long artificial speeches, to lay all blame upon the Queen's Majesty, or rather upon the Council, that all the troubles past did ensue from them, avowing her reasonable offers and our refusals. And in these speeches I did so encounter her with reasons out of my knowledge and experience, as she hath not the advantage she looked for. And, as I am assured, the auditory did find her case not pitiable, and her allegations untrue."

her. The two Houses of Parliament addressed her on the 12th November, begging that for the sake of the realm and her own safety the sentence might be carried into effect. At no point of her career was the profound duplicity of Elizabeth more resorted to than now. She had evidently determined that Mary must die, which is of itself not surprising; but she was equally determined that, if she could help it, no blame should personally attach to her for having disregarded the privileges of a crowned head. After much pretended sorrow and repudiation of any desire for revenge, but at the same time setting forth a careful recapitulation of Mary's offences, she complained of Parliament for passing the Act which made it necessary for her to pronounce sentence of death on a kinswoman, and said she must take time for prayer and contemplation before she could give an answer to the petition. A few days afterwards she besought the Houses to consider again whether some other course could not be adopted instead of executing Mary, but she was assured by them that there was "no other sound and assured means" than that which they had formerly recommended (18th November). Her next address to the Houses was still more hypocritical. After infinite talk of her mercy, her goodness, and her hatred of bloodshed, even for her own safety, she ended enigmatically: "Therefore if I should say I would not do what you request, it might be peradventure more than I thought, and to say I would do it might perhaps breed peril of what you labour to preserve, being more than in your own wisdoms and discretions would seem convenient."[1]

Several days before this, Mary's sentence had been communicated to her by Lord Buckhurst and Beale. She was dignified and courageous, rejoiced that she was to die, as she said, for the Catholic faith, and again

[1] Hollingshead.

affirmed that she had taken no part in the plot for the murder of Elizabeth, which was doubtless true so far as active participation or direction was concerned. Her letters written immediately afterwards to Mendoza[1] and the Duke of Guise[2] are conceived in the same spirit, and appear to entertain no expectation of mercy. The Spaniards, however, were more hopeful, and ascribed to Burghley a deep scheme for selling Mary's life to France, in exchange for concessions to English interests.

The arrangements for the invasion of England by a great fleet from Spain were now so far advanced as to be impossible of concealment, and the English Government were actively adopting measures of defence and reprisal. Under the transparent pretext of aiding Don Antonio, English armed ships were hounding Spanish commerce from the seas and harrying Spanish settlements; the English troops under Leicester, and the Scots under the Master of Gray, were fighting Spaniards in Holland, and the English militant Protestant party had now supplanted Burghley's policy on all sides. But still the cautious old statesman patiently worked in his own way to minimise the dangers with which his political opponents had already surrounded the Queen. There were two things only that he could do, namely, once more to endeavour to disarm Spain by making a show of friendship, and to sow discord between France and Spain; and both these things he did. One of Ralegh's privateers had captured Philip's governor of Patagonia, the famous explorer and navigator, Sarmiento; and almost simultaneously with the passing of Mary's sentence, Ralegh was invited to bring his prisoner to Cecil House for a private conference. Sarmiento was flattered and made much of,

[1] Mary to Mendoza, 24th November (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, part iii.).

[2] Paris Archives; *in extenso* in Von Raumer.

and received his free release on condition of his taking to Spain messages from Burghley and Ralegh suggesting a friendly arrangement between the countries. Ralegh, indeed, went so far as to offer—whether sincerely or not does not affect the question—two of his ships for Philip's service, and for many weeks sympathetic messages found their way secretly from the Lord Treasurer and Sir Walter to Spain and Flanders.[1]

At the same time Sir Henry Wotton was sent to Paris with certified copies of Mary's will in favour of Philip, and of her correspondence with Mendoza. "He is instructed to point out how much she depended upon your Majesty, and how shy she was of France."[2] This was exactly the course most likely to alienate Henry III. from Spain and his sister-in-law; and although he tardily sent Pomponne de Bellièvre to remonstrate with Elizabeth, the Spaniards and Guisans, at all events, never believed in the sincerity of his protests.[3] Mendoza writes: "Elizabeth has given orders that directly Bellièvre arrives in England the rumour is to be spread that the Queen of Scots is killed, in order to discover how he takes it. Bellièvre, however, is forewarned of it, and has his instructions what

[1] Philip's secret agent in London wrote at the time urging that "a message should be sent from Spain to the Lord Treasurer, who is the ruling spirit in all this business, and is desirous of peace, to let him know that your Majesty wished for his friendship" (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, part iii.).

[2] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, part iii.

[3] Bellièvre did not arrive in England until 1st December. An account of his embassy will be found printed in Labanoff. The regular Ambassador, Chateauneuf, did his best, for he was a Guisan, but Elizabeth flatly told him she believed he was exceeding his instructions. His own doubts as to his master's real wishes are expressed in a letter to D'Esneval in Paris (20th October): "Je vous prie me mander privément, ou ouvertement, l'intention de Sa Majesté sur les choses de deça; car il me semble que l'on se soucie fort peu de par dela du fait de la Reine d'Ecosse." Davison wrote to Burghley at Fotheringay (8th October), telling him of the "presumption" of Chateauneuf's first remonstrance, and the rebuke sent to him by the Queen "for attempting to school her in her actions."

to say when he hears it. It is a plan of Cecil's arising out of a desire (as I wrote to your Majesty) to sell to the French on the best terms they can what they do not dream of carrying out. The English and French will have no difficulty in agreeing on the point, because the King and his mother are very well pleased that the Queen of Scots should be kept alive, though a prisoner, in order to prevent the succession of your Majesty to the English throne; whilst the English see plainly that the many advantages accruing to them from keeping the Queen of Scots a prisoner would change into as many dangers if they made away with her."[1]

On the 6th December public proclamation of Mary's sentence was made in London amidst signs of extravagant rejoicing on the part of the populace. The next day Bellièvre delivered a long speech to the Queen, in which he made no attempt to deny Mary's guilt, but appealed to Elizabeth's magnanimity, and proposed guarantees from France to insure Mary's future harmlessness. The Queen repeated bitterly her grievances against Mary, and replied that the life of Mary was incompatible with her own safety; and Lord Burghley, in a subsequent interview with the Frenchman, repeated more emphatically the same idea. Shortly afterwards, at the renewed request of Bellièvre and Chateauneuf, Elizabeth ungraciously consented to grant a respite of twelve days to Mary to enable the Ambassadors to communicate with their master. But Henry III. himself was now in a hopeless condition. "Such is the confusion of the court, the vacillation of the King, and the jealousy, hatred, and suspicion of the courtiers, that decisions are adopted and abandoned at random. . . . The King is trying to draw closer to the Queen of England, which is

[1] Mendoza to Philip, 7th December (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, part iii.).

the principal object of Bellièvre's mission."[1] The only reply, therefore, sent to Bellièvre and Chateauneuf from France was a pedantic and wordy appeal to Elizabeth's mercy, which must have convinced her that she need fear nothing from the French.[2]

Notwithstanding the first movement of indignation on the part of James also, it soon became clear that selfish reasons would confine his action to protest. This is not altogether to be wondered at. He had been informed that Mary had disinherited him, and told De Courcelles, the French Ambassador, that he knew "she had no more good-will towards him than towards the Queen of England." The Master of Gray, at his side, too, was the humble servant of England, and the traitor, Archibald Douglas, represented him in the English court. On pressure from France, however, James sent Sir William Keith, another English partisan, to intercede for his mother, or at least to induce Elizabeth to delay the execution until a fitting embassy from him might be sent. Elizabeth hectored and stormed at James's threatening letters; but when she became calmer she granted the twelve days' respite already referred to. The Master of

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, part iii. In a marginal note to another letter, Philip himself expresses an opinion that Bellièvre has gone, not to save Mary's life, but for another purpose.

[2] See Lord Burghley's notes of this appeal for his reply thereto (Hatfield State Papers, part iii.); and also Elizabeth's own most interesting letter to Henry III. (Harl. MSS., 4647). She ends by a hit at Henry's helpless position: "I beg you, therefore, rather to think of the means of preserving than of diminishing my friendship. Your States, my good brother, cannot bear many enemies; do not for God's sake give the rein to wild horses, lest they throw you from your seat." Another characteristic step taken in England at the same time was to concoct a bogus plot to murder Elizabeth, in which it was pretended that the Ambassador Chateauneuf was concerned. This gave an opportunity for much anger and complaint on the part of Elizabeth, especially against the Guises; and in Lord Burghley's memoranda giving reasons for Mary's execution, this so-called plot of Stafford, Moody, and Destrappes is gravely set forth as a contributing factor.

Gray and Sir Robert Melvil subsequently arrived at the English court and were equally unsuccessful.[1] Melvil undoubtedly did his best, and Elizabeth threatened his life in consequence; but the Master of Gray's advocacy went no further than he knew would please the English Government.

It is certain that Elizabeth herself had decided that Mary should die, if the execution could be carried out without uniting France and Spain against her, and especially if she herself could manage to escape personal opprobrium. Of Lord Burghley's personal opinion on the matter it is extremely difficult to judge. He is generally represented by historians as being the prime enemy and persecutor of the unhappy woman, which he certainly was not. He was a cautious man and took his stand behind legal forms; but the slightest slackness on his part was represented by Leicester and his friends as a desire to curry favour with Mary. He, the Howards, Crofts, and the other conservatives were, as usual, desirous of staving off the rupture with Spain, but dared not appear for a moment to favour so unpopular a cause as that of Mary. The truth of this view is partly shown by the revelations of Sir Edward Stafford, the English Ambassador in Paris, a great friend of Burghley's and a paid agent of Spain. Stafford told Charles Arundell in January that Burghley had written that Bellièvre had not acted so cleverly as they had expected, and if that he (Burghley) had not prompted him he would have done worse still.

[1] Gray's own feelings in the matter may be seen by his copious correspondence with Archibald Douglas, at Hatfield. He had, when he was in Flanders, proposed that Mary might be put out of the way by poison, and was hated by Mary's friends in consequence. "If she die," he said, "I shall be blamed, and if she live I shall be ruined;" but he was forced against his will to accept the embassy and acted in a similar way to Bellièvre—pleaded with strong words but weak arguments, in order that his own position might be saved whether Mary lived or died.

"He was advised to ask for private audience without Chateauneuf, and was closeted with the Queen, who was accompanied by only four persons. What passed at the interview was consequently not known; but that he (Cecil) could assure him (Stafford) that the Queen of Scotland's life would be spared, although she would be kept so close that she would not be able to carry on her plots as hitherto. This is what I have always assured your Majesty was desired by the Queen of England, as well as the King of France. Cecil also says that, although he has constantly shown himself openly against the Queen of Scots, Leicester and Walsingham, his enemies, had tried to set the Queen against him by saying that he was more devoted to the Queen of Scotland than any one. But she (Elizabeth) had seen certain papers in her (Mary's) coffers that told greatly against Leicester, and the Queen had told the latter and Walsingham that they were a pair of knaves, and she saw plainly now that, owing to her not having taken the advice of certain good and loyal subjects of hers, she was in peril of losing her throne and her life, by burdening herself with a war which she was unable to carry on. She said if she had done her duty as Queen she would have had them both hanged."[1]

By this and several similar pronouncements it would appear that Burghley, true to his invariable method, was still by indirect and cautious steps endeavouring to lead the Queen back to the moderate path from which Leicester, Walsingham, and the militant Protestants had diverted her; and that, very far from being the mortal enemy of Mary, he would probably have saved her if he could have done it with perfect harmlessness to himself, and have insured the future security of the Queen

[1] Mendoza to Philip, 24th January 1587 (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth, vol. iv.).

and Government. But whilst the Queen was very slowly being influenced by the Catholics and Conservatives near her, events were precipitated and Mary paid the last penalty. There is no space in this work to tell in detail the obscure and much debated story of the issue of the warrant for Mary's execution;[1] but a summary glance at Burghley's share in it cannot be excluded in any biography of the statesman. Soon after the proclamation of the sentence (6th December 1586) Elizabeth herself directed Burghley to draft the warrant for the execution. He did so, and sent for Secretary Davison—Walsingham being absent from illness—and informed him that as he, Burghley, was returning to London, the court then being at Richmond, he would leave the draft with Davison that it might be engrossed and presented to the Queen for signature. When Davison laid the document before the Queen she told him to keep it back for the present. Six weeks passed without anything more being done, and Leicester in the interval complained to Davison, in Burghley's presence, of his remissness in not again laying the document before the Queen.

The Master of Gray left London at the end of January, and on the 1st February Lord Admiral Howard told the Queen that there was much disquieting talk in the country with regard to attempts to be made for the rescue of Mary, &c.[2] Elizabeth then requested Howard to send for Davison and direct him to lay the warrant before her for signature. The Secretary accordingly carried the warrant to the Queen, who was full of smiles and amiability, and asked him what he had there. Davison told her, and she signed the warrant, explaining

[1] The matter is fully discussed in Nicolas's Life of Davison.

[2] It is curious that the warning should come from Howard, a Catholic and a Conservative, several of whose relatives were Spanish pensioners.

to him whilst doing so, that she had hitherto delayed it for the sake of her own reputation. Then, with a joke, she handed the signed warrant back to him, and, according to Davison, bade him carry it at once to the Lord Chancellor, have it sealed with the great seal as privately as possible, and send it away to the Commissioners, so that she should hear no more about it.

Elizabeth afterwards, however, swore that she had given him no such instructions. As he was leaving, Elizabeth directed him to call on Walsingham, who was confined to his house by illness, and to tell him what had been done. She then spoke bitterly of Amias Paulet for not having made the warrant unnecessary, and hinted to Davison that he might write to Paulet again suggesting the poisoning of Mary. This Davison demurred at doing, as he knew that it would be fruitless, and he did not relish the task, but promised to mention it to Walsingham. The Secretary's story is that he went straight to Lord Burghley and showed him and Leicester the warrant, repeating the Queen's directions. He then proceeded to Walsingham House; and the result of his visit is seen in a memorandum (dated the next day, 2nd February) in Walsingham's hand, annotated by Lord Burghley, laying down the steps to be taken for immediately carrying the warrant into effect.[1] The fullest details, even for the burial, are set forth, and at the end it is directed that "the Lords and court are to give out that there will be no execution."

Thus far Davison's statement has been followed; but there is at Hatfield (part iii., No. 472) a rough draft in Lord Burghley's handwriting, which, in view of the date upon it, 2nd February, throws rather a new light

[1] Hatfield Papers, part iii. There is no mention of the poison letter to Paulet, but it was written, and is printed in Nicolas's Life of Davison, with Paulet's reply.

upon the matter, and proves that, unknown to Davison, Lord Burghley and the rest of the Council were accomplices of the Queen in her intention of subsequently repudiating her orders and ruining her Secretary, and that the tragi-comedy was not played by Elizabeth alone, but by her grave Councillors as well. The draft document is in the name of the Council, and sets forth the reasons that had moved them to despatch the warrant without further consulting the Queen; "*and yet we are now at this time most sorry to understand that your Majesty is so greatly grieved with this kind of proceeding, and do most humbly beseech your Majesty*," &c. This, be it remembered, is dated the 2nd February, before the warrant had been sent off or the Queen even knew it had been sealed.

Early in the morning of the 2nd the Queen sent Killigrew to Davison, directing him not to go to the Lord Chancellor until he had seen her. When he entered her presence she asked him, to his surprise, whether he had had the warrant sealed, and he informed her that he had. Why so much haste? she asked; to which he replied that she had told him to use despatch. He then inquired if she wished the warrant executed. Yes, she said; but she did not like the form of it, for it threw all the responsibility upon her, and again suggested poison as the best way out of her difficulty.

All this made Davison suspicious, and he went to Hatton and told him that he feared the intention was subsequently to disavow him. He would, he said, take no more responsibility, but would go at once to Lord Burghley. This he did, and the latter summoned the Privy Council for next day; whilst he, Burghley, busied himself in drafting the letters to the Commissioners, the Earls of Kent and Shrewsbury. The next morning

(3rd February) the Council met in Lord Burghley's room, and the Lord Treasurer laid the whole matter before them, repeating Davison's story, and recommending that the warrant should be despatched without further reference to the Queen. This was agreed to, and the instructions and warrant were sent the same night (Friday, 3rd February) to the Commissioners, Burghley himself handing the document to Beale to carry down into the country.

The next morning when Davison entered the Queen's room at Greenwich she was chatting with Ralegh, and told the Secretary that she had dreamed the previous night that the Queen of Scots was executed, which made her very angry. It was a good thing, she said, that Davison was not near her at the time. This frightened Davison, and he asked her whether she really did not wish the warrant executed. With an oath she said she did, but again repeated what she had said the previous day about the responsibility, and "another way of doing it." A day or so afterwards, Davison informed the Queen that Paulet had indignantly refused Walsingham's suggestion to poison Mary, whereupon she broke into complaints of the "daintiness of these precise fellows," and violently denounced people who professed to love and defend her, but threw all responsibility upon her.

On the 8th February the tragedy of Fotheringay was consummated, and in the afternoon of the 9th young Talbot brought the news to London. Lord Burghley at once summoned Davison, and after consulting with Hatton and others, it was decided not to tell the Queen suddenly. When she learnt it later in the day the well-prepared blow fell upon Davison. The Queen pretended to be infuriated, swore that she had never intended to have the warrant divulged, and whilst

blaming all the Councillors,[1] threw most of the onus upon Davison. The Council advised him to retire from court, and he was soon afterwards cast into the Tower and degraded from his office. After a long and tedious trial and a painful imprisonment, he was condemned to a fine sufficient to ruin him, and thenceforward lived in poverty and obscurity. The Earl of Essex fought manfully in his favour whilst he lived, but Lord Burghley and the rest of the Councillors were too strong for him, and the man they had ruined was never allowed to raise his head again.[2]

That Burghley and the other principal Councillors were parties to the plot, and that the Queen's anger with them was assumed, is also seen by a memorandum in Burghley's handwriting at Hatfield,[3] dated 17th February, headed "The State of the Cause *as it ought to be*

[1] The Queen kept up a pretence of anger against the Councillors for some time, and especially against Burghley, who on the 13th February wrote her a submissive letter praying for her favour. He was excluded from her presence, and complains that she "doth utter more heavy, hard, bitter, and minatory speeches against me than against any other," which he ascribes to the calumnies of his many enemies, and to the fact that he alone was not allowed to justify his action personally to her. "I have," he says, "confusedly uttered my griefs, being glad that the night of my age is so near by service and sickness as I shall not long wake to see the miseries that I fear others shall see that are like to overwatch me." When at length he obtained audience of the Queen, she treated him so harshly that he again retired, and was only induced to return again by the intercession of Hatton. Elizabeth's special anger with Burghley may have been an elaborate pretence agreed upon between them, or, what is more probable, the result of some calumnies of Leicester.

[2] An interesting statement of Burghley's treatment of Davison in later years will be found in Harl. MSS., 290. Part of his unrelenting attitude to him is commonly attributed to Burghley's desire to secure the Secretaryship of State for his son, Sir Robert Cecil. It is evident, however, that Davison was adopted by Essex as one of his instruments to oppose Burghley's policy, and the restoration of Davison would thereafter have meant a defeat for the Cecils. This, it appears to me, amply explains the Lord Treasurer's attitude.

[3] Hatfield Papers, part iii. 223.

conceived and reported concerning the Execution done upon the Queen of Scots," in which the Queen's version is adopted, and all the blame thrown upon Davison and the Council. Even before this was written the affair was so reported to Burghley's friend Stafford in Paris, in order that this version might be spread on the Continent. Charles Arundell, in conveying the news from Stafford to Mendoza, says that Burghley was absent through illness,[1] and that the execution was carried through by Davison, "who is a terrible heretic," and the rest of Mary's enemies. This is perhaps the blackest stain that rests upon Burghley's name. We have seen before that he was not generous or magnanimous in his treatment of others when his own interests were at stake; and the sacrifice of Davison would probably appear to him a very small price to pay for helping Elizabeth out of a difficult position, and maintaining his own favour.

Although we have seen that the Lord Treasurer from motives of policy had been forced to take a prominent part in the condemnation and execution of Mary, it cannot be supposed that the position of affairs at the time was agreeable to him. The wars in Flanders, the persecution of English Protestants in Spain, the reprisals of Drake and the privateers, and the Catholic plots in the interests of Mary had aroused a strong Protestant war feeling in the country. Leicester and his friends had the popular voice on their side, and Burghley and the Conservatives could only very cautiously and tentatively endeavour to stay the impetus with which the country

[1] That Lord Burghley was desirous of dissociating himself personally from the execution, and of remaining on good terms with the Catholic party, is further seen by a remark made in a letter from Mendoza to Philip (26th March 1587): "Cecil, the Lord Treasurer, said publicly that he was opposed to the execution, and on this and all other points feeling was running very high in the Council; Cecil and Leicester being open opponents" (Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth).

was rushing towards a national war with the strongest power in Christendom. The great Armada was in full preparation, and the ports of Italy, Flanders, Spain, and Portugal rang with the sound of arms. Don Antonio once more was welcomed in England, to be used as a stalking-horse, this being Lord Burghley's last hope of levying war without national responsibility.

But though there was much talk about Don Antonio, and Spanish spies in England continued to report that the great fleet under Drake was to be employed in his interests, its real object was to render impossible, at least for that year, the junction of Philip's naval forces in Lisbon. Thanks to the efforts of Burghley and his party, an elaborate pretence was kept up of the expedition being a private one; but it was really controlled and organised by government officers, and the second in command, Borough, was a Queen's admiral, sent avowedly to place a check upon Drake, and to prevent him from going too far in his open attack upon Spain. Drake's instructions were "to prevent or withstand any enterprise as might be attempted against her Highness's dominions, and especially by preventing the concentration of Philip's squadrons;" and he was to distress the ships as much as possible, both in the havens themselves and on the high seas. Drake arrived in Plymouth from the Thames on the 23rd March, and in a week of incessant energy had everything ready. The secret of his intentions was well kept, and Mendoza's many spies could only tardily report the loose gossip of the streets. Sir Edward Stafford assured his Spanish paymaster that no living soul but the Queen and the Lord Treasurer knew what the design was to be.

Leicester was now at Buxton (April 1587), shortly to start on another visit to Flanders, and in his absence Burghley's influence, both Ralegh and Hatton being on

his side, as well as Crofts and the Catholics, overshadowed that of Walsingham and Knollys. Drake seems to have feared the consequence of this, and hurried his departure from Plymouth (2nd April). He was only just in time, for as soon as he had gone a courier came in hot haste with orders from the Council, which now meant Burghley, strictly limiting Drake's action:[1] "You shall forbear to enter forcibly into any of the said King's ports or havens, or to offer any violence to any of his towns or shipping within harbour, or to do any act of hostility on land."

This was exactly what Drake had foreseen. The ship sent after him with the orders failed to reach him, and the great seaman went on his way. But, as usual with Drake, the official drag on the wheel had to be overcome. Off Cape St. Vincent, Borough recited to the Admiral the conditions under which the Queen's ships accompanied him, evidently expecting that he would not confine his operations to preventing the concentration of the Spanish squadrons. But Drake was on his own element now, and sailed straight to Cadiz, as some people had shrewdly expected he meant to do from the first.[2] Borough warned him not to exceed the Queen's orders, and was placed under arrest for his pains; and unopposed, Drake sailed into Cadiz harbour, to the dismay of the astounded Spaniards. He plundered, burned, and sank all the ships in port, destroyed the stores, and then quietly sailed out again unmolested. He did damage to the extent of a million ducats (though Philip wrote that

[1] Walsingham, conveying this news to Leicester in Flanders (17th April), says: "There are letters written from certain of my Lords, by her Majesty's effectual command, to inhibit him (Drake) to attempt anything by land or within the ports of Spain." On the 11th he wrote: "This resolution proceedeth altogether upon a hope of peace, which I fear may do much harm."

[2] The first hint to this effect reached Philip too late to be useful. It was conveyed by Mendoza from Stafford in Paris on the 19th April, the day that Drake reached Cadiz.

he felt the insolence of the act more than the material damage), and if he had cared to disobey the Queen's orders further he might have stopped the Armada for good by burning the ships in Lisbon, for they had neither guns nor men on board to protect them. But he knew now that the peace party in the Council were busy arranging with Parma's envoy for the meeting of a conference, and doubtless thought he had gone far enough in his brilliant disobedience.

The indispensable Andrea de Looe had arrived in London from the Prince of Parma immediately after Drake sailed, and was soon deep in negotiation with Burghley with the object of arranging a meeting of Peace Commissioners. When he had returned to Brussels with the proposals, news came of Drake's daring raid. De Looe then wrote a long letter to Burghley (11th July), pointing out how much the cause of peace was injured by such acts of aggression. Burghley's answer[1] (28th July) perfectly defines his position towards Drake's action. After professing the Queen's desire for peace, and readiness to send her Commissioners to Flanders if the Duke of Parma will suspend hostilities (before the Sluys), he says: "True it is, and I avow it upon my faith, her Majesty did send a ship expressly with a message by letters charging him (Drake) not to show any act of hostility before he went to Cadiz, which messenger, by contrary winds, could never come to the place where he was, but was constrained to come home, and hearing of Sir Fras. Drake's actions, her Majesty commanded the party that returned to be punished, but he acquitted himself by oath of himself and all his company. And so unwitting, yea unwilling, to her Majesty those actions were committed by Sir Fras. Drake, for the which her Majesty is greatly offended with him; and now also for

[1] Foreign Office Records, Flanders, 32.

bringing home of a rich ship that came out of the East Indies."[1] And then, as some counterbalance to these enormities, Lord Burghley sets forth once more the various grievances of England against Spain.

Whilst the elaborate and frequently insincere negotiations for peace were being laboriously pursued for many months, Lord Burghley's other standing policy was not neglected, namely, that of causing jealousy between France and Spain. Henry III. was now in mortal fear of Guise, and was ready to listen to English and Huguenot suggestions that Philip's conquest of England would be followed by a Guisan dynasty under Spanish patronage in France All the French influence at the Vatican was exercised to procure the conversion of James Stuart and the opposition of Spanish aims, and before the end of the year Lord Burghley had the satisfaction of seeing that Henry III. and his clever mother in no case would aid Philip to subjugate England.

Elizabeth, in the meanwhile, was assailed by doubts and fears, and periodical fits of penuriousness in the midst of her danger, which drove her Councillors to despair. Stafford told Mendoza that "Cecil writes that the Queen is so peevish and discontented that it was feared she would not live long. Her temper is so bad that no Councillor dares to mention business to her, and when even he (Cecil) did so, she had told him that she had been strong enough to lift him out of the dirt, and was able to cast him down again. He (Cecil) was of opinion that the Councillors might be divided into three classes—those who wished to come to terms with Spain, those who desired a close friendship with France, and those who wanted to stand aloof from both, whilst enriching themselves with plunder. He (Cecil) was neither a

[1] This was the great galleon *San Felipe*, one of the richest prizes ever brought to England.

Spaniard nor a Frenchman, but wished the Queen to be friendly with both powers. King Henry, under whom the country was powerful and tranquil, thought he was doing a great thing when he was able to make war with France when he had an alliance with Spain; and now it happened that the French were as desirous of being friendly as the English were, and he urges the Ambassador to hasten the conclusion of an agreement.[1]

But whilst he was writing amiably for the French, he took care, on the other hand, to make the most of the peace negotiations with Spain, and thus to cause Henry to be the more anxious for England's friendship. The old statesman was thus cautiously and slowly going on his traditional way, hopeless though he must have been of the final result as regarded keeping peace with Spain. The long-continued preparations of the Armada were rapidly approaching completion; the Pope had been cajoled into promising funds unwillingly to aid Philip's aims; the English Catholic refugees were eagerly awaiting the harvest of their efforts; the great, cumbrous machine for crushing England was already in motion, and no efforts of diplomacy could stop it.

But yet Burghley did his best. The war and plunder party, as usual, checked him at every turn; but early and late, through constant pain and sickness, family trouble[2] and public disappointment, he struggled on in

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

[2] His mother, the owner of Burghley, had just died, aged eighty-five; and his unmanageable son-in-law, the Earl of Oxford, still caused him endless trouble. His only family consolation at the time was the promise of his favourite son, Sir Robert Cecil, whose great talents and application were already remarkable. How incessant and varied Lord Burghley's labours still were may be seen by the great number of letters addressed to him, entreating him for help, influence, or advice. The Catholic Earl of Arundel from the Tower, the Earl of Huntingdon, Lord Buckhurst, Lord Cobham, and a host of other nobles appealed to him to forward their suits; Puritan divines like Hammond, Cartwright, Humphreys, and Travers; prelates like Whitgift, Aylmer,

the way he had marked out for himself so many years before—to divide England's possible enemies, and keep the peace with Spain so long as was humanly possible. The Queen was full of qualms and misgivings; swaying now to one side, now to another, and abusing in turn both the party of peace and the advocates of war. "The Queen has been scolding the Lord Treasurer greatly for the last few days, for having neglected to disburse money for the fleet," wrote a Spanish spy in November; and a few days afterwards, when she was alarmed at the delay in Parma's reply, she flew into a tremendous rage with Burghley, "upon whom she heaped a thousand insults," for having induced her to negotiate for peace whilst the enemy completed his preparations. "She told the Treasurer he was old and doting; to which he replied that he knew he was old, and would gladly retire to a church to pray for her." But the old minister gave the Queen as good as she brought, and in vigorous words pointed out in detail that her present dangers arose entirely from her neglect of his advice and the imprudence of his opponents in the Council.[1] But the next day came Parma's answer, and the Queen was all smiles again towards Burghley and the peacemakers.

Herbert, and Sandys, by common accord chose him as the arbiter of their constant disputes. The Court of Wards, too, entailed a large correspondence and much personal attention; whilst at this period Burghley was also deeply concerned in checking the tendency of Cambridge students to indulge in "satin doublets, silk and velvet overstocks, great fine ruffs, and costly facings to their gowns."

[1] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

CHAPTER XV

1588–1593

WHILST the tedious negotiations with Parma were dragging on, no slackness was visible in the preparations for resisting the attack on England. Drake was sent to the mouth of the Channel with a fine squadron of ships, whilst the Lord Admiral's fleet was being put in readiness in the Thames with all haste; and Ralegh in Devonshire, Hunsdon in the north, and Lord Grey and Sir John Norris in the home counties, were busily organising the land forces. As usual, upon Lord Burghley rested much of the labour and responsibility, and to him matters great and small were referred for decision.[1] The English preparations met with many difficulties. The Queen was fractious and fickle, one day hectoring and threatening, and the next cursing Walsingham and his gang, who had drawn her into this strait, and were for ever pestering her for money, which she doled out as sparingly as possible. There was, moreover, no great alacrity shown at first by the people at large in providing special funds to meet the great national emergency, and the trading classes were grumbling at Leicester and the greedy gentlemen whose piracy was largely responsible for the coming war.

The sending of Peace Commissioners to Parma was,

[1] As instances see letters—Ralegh to Burghley, 27th December 1587 (State Papers, Domestic, ccvi. 40); Howard to Burghley, 22nd December (State Papers, Domestic, ccvi. 42); same to same (Harl. MSS., 6994, 102); Burghley's own holograph list of ships and their destinations, 5th January 1588; Hawkins to Burghley, 18th January 1588 (both in State Papers, Domestic, cviii.); and many similar papers of this period in State Papers, Domestic, cviii., and Harl. MSS., 6994.

as usual, the subject of division in the Council, Burghley naturally advocating the pacific policy, and Leicester, Walsingham, and Paulet violently opposing the negotiations except on impossible terms. The Queen wavered constantly, but was more frequently on the side of peace. Soon after Leicester returned from Holland (January 1588) he opposed in the Council the sending of Commissioners. A comedy was played the same night before the Queen and court, and as the company rose, Elizabeth turned upon Leicester in a great rage and told him she *must* make peace with Spain at any cost. "If my ships are lost," she said, "nothing can save me." Leicester tried to tranquillise her by talking about Drake; but she replied that all he did was to irritate the enemy to her detriment.[1]

The instructions to the Peace Commissioners, as drafted by Burghley,[2] seem to be an honest attempt to come to terms. England was to pledge herself not to send aid of any sort, to the prejudice of Philip, to any of the dominions he had inherited (thus excluding Portugal), and Philip was asked, at least, to bind himself to prevent the molestation by the Inquisition of English mariners on board their ships in Spanish ports. But side by side with this there is reason to believe that Lord Burghley, probably through Crofts, endeavoured to gain the Duke of Parma personally to the side of peace.[3] He had been badly treated by Philip in the matter of Portugal, and was still in the dark as to the King's real intentions. He was liable to dismissal at any moment;

[1] Stafford told Mendoza (25th February) that Burghley had written to him saying, that he would do his best to prevent Drake from sailing, as his voyages were only profitable to himself and his companions, but an injury to the Queen and an irritation to foreign princes; and in May, Burghley told Stafford that if he had remained out of town two days longer, his colleagues would have let Drake go.

[2] Hatfield Papers, part iii.

[3] Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

he was short of money, and chafing at the inexplicable delay of the Armada. It was suggested that a condition of the peace might be to give him fixity of tenure of his government of Flanders for life. How far these approaches may have influenced him it is at present difficult to say, but he certainly appealed to Philip earnestly and solemnly to allow him to make peace,[1] and when the Armada finally appeared in the Channel he did nothing to falsify his own prediction of the disaster which awaited it.

The English Commissioners[2] embarked for Ostend (a town in English-Dutch occupation) in March, but one of them, Crofts, a Spanish agent, made no hesitation of landing in Philip's town of Dunkirk and proceeding overland to Ostend. After infinite bickering as to the place of meeting, the preliminary conferences were held in a tent between Ostend and Nieuport; but on questions of procedure and powers the negotiations were delayed until the Armada had sailed from Lisbon, and Philip's pretence could be kept up no longer, when the Commissioners hurriedly returned. Crofts' desire to serve his Spanish paymasters, and to obtain peace at any price, caused him to go beyond his public instructions in making concessions, and at the instance of Leicester he was cast into the Tower on his return; but the rest of the Commissioners acknowledged that they had been tricked, and that Philip had never intended peace. Many persons had thought so from the first, though the delay had been

[1] This mission was said to have been entrusted originally to Paulet, and afterwards to Herbert? but as they did not go to Flanders, it is more likely to have been left to Crofts. I can, however, find no record of it except in Spanish account.

[2] The Commissioners were the Earl of Derby, Lord Cobham, Sir James Crofts, with Valentine Dale and Rogers. Burghley's son, Sir Robert Cecil, was also attached. The whole correspondence of the Commissioners, mostly directed to Lord Burghley, will be found in Cotton, Vesp., cviii.

advantageous for England. The Lord Admiral, writing to Walsingham before the Commissioners left England, says: "There never was since England was England such a stratagem and mask made to deceive England, withal, as this is of the treaty of peace. I pray God we have not cause to remember one thing that was made of the Scots by the Englishmen; that we do not curse for this a long grey beard with a white head, witless, that will make all the world think us heartless. You know whom I mean."[1]

Though Burghley had struggled for thirty years to maintain peace with Spain, when war was inevitable he took far more than his share of the labour of organising it. As usual, he worked early and late, sometimes almost in despair at the Queen's penuriousness and irritability, and himself suffering incessantly. Whilst he was still striving for peace (10th April) he thus writes to Walsingham: "I cannot express my pain, newly increased in all my left arm. My spirits are even now so extenuated as I have no mind towards anything but to groan with my pain. . . . Surely, sir, as God will be best pleased with peace, so in nothing can her Majesty content her realm better than in procuring it. . . . So forced with pain, even from my arm to my heart, I end."[2] In the midst of the preparations, when Howard, Winter, Drake, and Hawkins were daily writing reports or requests to the over-burdened Lord Treasurer, his favourite but unfortunate daughter, Lady Oxford, died. In his diary he simply records the fact in the words, "Anna Comitissa Oxoniæ, filia mia charissima, obiit in Do. Greenwici et 25, Sepult. Westminster;"[3] but the bereaved father was

[1] Motley thought that Burghley was referred to, but surely Howard would not call him witless. Probably Crofts is meant.

[2] State Papers, Domestic, ccix.

[3] Howard, writing on the 13th June to Walsingham, says: "I forbear to write unto my Lord Treasurer because I am sure he is a very heavy man for my lady his daughter, for which I am most heartily sorry."

in a few days hard at work again, though still confined to his bed.[1]

At length, on the 30th July (N.S.), the long looked for Armada appeared in the Channel. The story of how the sceptre of the sea passed to England during the next week has often been told elsewhere, and need not be here repeated; but Burghley's share of the glory at least must not go unrecorded. We have seen how the details of organisation were largely left in his hands; but, in addition to this, like other great nobles, he raised a special force, clothed in his colours, and maintained at his expense,[2] and visited the army encamped at Tilbury, "where," says Leicester, "I made a fair show for my Lord Treasurer, who came from London to see us." It is usually asserted also that his two sons, Sir Thomas and Sir Robert, joined the English fleet, like so many other gentlemen of rank; and although this may be true, for certainly Sir Robert was at Dover,[3] and might perhaps have gone on board one of the ships, it is questionable, and their names do not appear in any of the records as being present.

It was hardly to be supposed that the Spaniards would

[1] Writing to Walsingham, "from my house near the Savoy," 17th July, he says: "I am at present by last night's torment weakened in spirits, as I am not able to rise out of my bed; which is my grief the more, because I cannot come thither where both my mind and duty do require;" and yet on the same day he (Burghley) sent a long minute corrected with his own hand to Darrell, giving directions for the victualling of the navy.

[2] In September, when the news came of the flight of the Armada, grand reviews of these forces were held previous to their being disbanded. Lord Chancellor Hatton entertained the Queen at dinner in Holborn, and his hundred men-at-arms in red and yellow paraded before her Majesty. The next day (20th August) a similar ceremony took place at Cecil House, and shortly afterwards Leicester's troop was reviewed. But they were all thrown into the shade by Essex's splendid force of sixty musketeers and sixty mounted harquebussiers, in orange-tawny, with white silk facings, and two hundred light horsemen, in orange velvet and silver.

[3] See his letter, 30th July (O.S.) to his father, giving him an account from hearsay of what had happened off Calais (State Papers, Domestic, ccxiii.).

so readily submit to defeat as not to renew the attack, for Englishmen had not yet gauged the paralysing effect of Philip's system upon his subjects, and, like the rest of the world, took Spain largely on trust; but Burghley was right in his forecast that the Armada itself was so broken and weak that it would run round Ireland and return no more. When the heroics in England were over and matters were settling down, there was still no cessation in the work of the Lord Treasurer. There were intricate victualling accounts to be laboriously calculated in perplexing Roman numerals;[1] there were wages to be paid; captains and admirals to be brought to book for every item of their expenditure, for the Queen would have no slackness in that respect, even though the country and herself had been rescued from a great peril; there were prisoners to interrogate, and plans to be made for future defence, and, as usual, Puritans and prelates to be appeased and reconciled. The lion's share of all this fell to the gouty, crippled old man with the bright eyes, the grave face, and the snowy hair—to Lord Treasurer Burghley.

Shortly after the disappearance of the Armada, Leicester died (4th September), on his way to Kenilworth, and Burghley lost the political rival who had continued to thwart him for nearly thirty years. Nothing proves more clearly Burghley's consummate prudence and tact than the fact that, to the very last, his relations with the Earl were always outwardly polite, and even friendly.[2] That

[1] The ordinary Arabic numbers were never used by Burghley, even in calculations.

[2] One of the last letters that Leicester wrote was to Burghley, from Maidenhead, two days only before his death, asking for some favour for a friend, Sir Robert Jermyn, and apologising for leaving court without taking leave of the Lord Treasurer; and in November the widowed Countess of Leicester—the mother of Essex—wrote begging Burghley to use his influence with the Queen to buy a vessel belonging to her late husband.

this was not owing to the forbearance of Leicester is seen by his violent quarrels with Sussex, Arundel, Ormonde, Heneage, Ralegh, and others who crossed his path.

The death of Leicester, together with that of Sir Walter Mildmay, which happened shortly afterwards, changed the balance of Elizabeth's Council. The old ministers were dropping off one by one and giving place to younger men, who could not expect to exercise over the experienced and mature ruler the same influence as that of her earlier advisers. In order to strengthen his party Lord Burghley had patronised Ralegh; but Leicester had retorted by bringing forward his young stepson Essex, whom his dying father had left as a solemn charge to Burghley. Essex was a mere lad of twenty-two when Leicester died, and as yet too young to head a party against the aged minister; but he had absorbed all the traditions of the dead favourite, and henceforward thwarted the Cecils to the best of his power with all the persistence of Leicester, but with a haughty incautiousness which belonged to himself alone, and ultimately led him to his tragic death.

Notwithstanding the crushing blow that Spanish power had received, English public feeling continued apprehensive and nervous. Spies abroad still sent alarmist reports of Philip's future plans, and few Englishmen had yet realised how completely their foe was disabled. When Parliament met, therefore, in February (1589), the largest subsidies ever voted were granted for the defence of the country, and the Houses petitioned her Majesty "to denounce open war against the King of Spain."

There were, however, other ways of crippling the foe more acceptable both to the Queen and her principal minister. Since 1581 Elizabeth had been playing fast and loose with Don Antonio, the claimant to the

crown of Portugal. Leicester and Walsingham had more than once encouraged him to spend large sums of money in England—raised on the sale or security of his jewels—in fitting out naval expeditions in his favour, but nothing effectual had been done for his cause. Catharine de Medici, on the other hand, had countenanced the despatch of two fine expeditions from France to the Azores, both of which had been disastrously defeated; and in the Armada year Antonio again came to England to seek for aid against the common enemy. He was sanguine, and ready to promise anything for immediate aid. Just before the Armada arrived, the plan of diverting Philip's forces by an attack on Portugal had been broached by the Lord Admiral in a letter to Walsingham, but the Queen would not then hear of any of her ships being sent away.

In September, however, circumstances had changed. It was useless to ask the Queen to accept the whole expense and responsibility of an expedition; but in September 1588, Antonio saw Lord Burghley, who wrote down the plans and offers he made. If, said the pretender, he could once land in Portugal with a sufficient force, all the country would rise in his favour; and his suggestion, supported by Sir John Norris and Sir Francis Drake, was to form a joint-stock undertaking with the countenance and help of the Queen and the Dutch, for the purpose of invading and capturing Portugal in his interest. In exchange he promised to pay the soldiers, and handsomely; to allow them to loot Spanish property in Lisbon; and, above all, to burn Philip's ships in Lisbon and Seville, and recoup the adventurers their expenditure with a large bonus.[1] If war were to be made at all, this was a method of making it likely to

[1] Lord Burghley's memoranda (State Papers, Domestic). For particulars of the expedition see "The Year after the Armada," by the present writer.

find favour in the eyes of the Queen and Burghley; and in February 1589[1] a warrant was issued authorising the expedition, and appointing rules for its government. Drake was to command at sea, and Norris by land, and the objects are carefully set forth in Burghley's words: "first, to distress the King of Spain's ships; second, to obtain possession of the Azores in order to intercept the treasure ships; and third, to assist Don Antonio to recover the kingdom of Portugal if it shall be found that the public voice be favourable to him."

The Queen contributed £20,000 and seven ships of the navy, and strict conditions were made that her money should not be wasted. But the affair was mismanaged from the first. Most of the men who went were idle vagabonds, the scum of the towns and the sweepings of the jails. The Dutch contingent fell away, the promises of support in England were not kept, money ran short, and the victuals went bad. The Queen lost her temper and began to frown upon the expedition when Drake's constant demands for further help became too pressing; but finally, after weeks of galling delay, through bad weather and other causes, the expedition put to sea (13th April), nearly 200 sail of all sorts, with 20,000 men. Shortly before it left, the Earl of Essex, with his brother and other gentlemen, had fled to Plymouth in disguise, shipped on board the *Swiftsure* and put to sea.[2] The Queen had specially refused him permission

[1] Don Antonio had been deceived so often in England, that although preparations for the expedition were being made for some months previously, he was not convinced that it was really intended for him until the end of the year 1588.

[2] On the eve of his flight Essex thus explained his action in a letter to Heneage (Hatfield Papers, part iii. 966): "What my courses have been I need not repeat, for no man knoweth them better than yourself. What my state now is I will tell you. My revenue is no greater than when I sued my livery, my debts at least two or three and twenty thousand pounds. Her Majesty's goodness has been so great I could not ask her for more; no way left to repair

to accompany the expedition; and when she found that her favourite had disobeyed her, her fury knew no bounds.

From that hour the expedition and commanders got nothing but ill words from her. Not content simply to burn the few ships in Coruña, the commanders lost a precious fortnight, in direct violation to orders, in besieging the place and burning the lower town. Wine was found in plenty, and excess incapacitated the greater part of the Englishmen; pestilence and desertion worked havoc in their ranks, and subsequently, as a crowning disaster, Norris, persuaded by Antonio against Drake's advice, marched overland from Peniche to Lisbon, instead of forcing the Tagus.

But Antonio had been deceived. None but a few country people joined him; the Portuguese in Lisbon were utterly cowed by the firmness and severity of the Archduke Albert and his few Spaniards, and Norris had no siege artillery. After a few days of useless heroism, in which young Essex showed himself the brave, rash, generous lad he was, the attempt was abandoned; and harassed by enemies in flank and rear, beset by famine, sickness, and panic, Norris, and what was left of his army, beat a retreat to Cascaes, where Drake and the ships awaited them. The Azores were never approached, and the ships in Lisbon and Seville were not burned, and the inglorious expedition slunk back again to England with a loss of two-thirds of its number of men.

Although Burghley had drawn up the conditions of the Queen's aid to the expedition, he took no active part in its subsequent organisation, for a great sorrow was impending, which fell upon him ten days before the expedition sailed. He had lived in harmony and affec-

myself but mine own adventure, which I had much rather undertake than offend her Majesty with suits, as I have done. If I speed well, I will adventure to be rich; if not, I will not live to see the end of my poverty."

tion with his wife for forty-three years, and her death on the 4th April cast him for a time into the deepest sorrow.[1] But even in the midst of his grief, his passion for placing everything on record led him to write a most interesting series of meditations on his loss, which is still extant.[2] Commencing by a reflection on the fruitlessness of wishing his "dear wife alive again in her mortal body," he proceeds at great length to lay down the direction his thoughts should take for consolation, such as gratitude to God for "His favour in permitting her to have lived so many years together with me, and to have given her grace to have the true knowledge of her salvation." But most of the curious document is occupied by a statement of the liberal anonymous charities of Lady Burghley, which during her life she had kept inviolably secret, even from her husband; and as some indication of the reality of Lord Burghley's grief, it may be mentioned that he signs the paper "April 9, 1588.[3] Written at Colling's Lodge by me in sorrow."

Through the whole course of his life we have seen William Cecil pursuing the traditional policy of suspicion of France and Scotland, and a desire to draw closer to

[1] His entry in his diary recording the fact runs thus: "1589. April 4 *Die Veneris inter hor* 3 *et* 4 *mane obdormit in Domino, Mildreda Domina Burgley.*" She is interred at Westminster Abbey, with her daughter the Countess of Oxford; a very long Latin inscription is on the tomb, written by Burghley, recording their many virtues and the writer's grief at their loss. There is at Hatfield (part iii. 973) a note of the mourners and arrangements for the funeral in Lord Burghley's handwriting.

[2] MSS. Lansdowne, ciii. 51.

[3] This is a not unnatural mistake under the circumstances for 9th April 1589. The year then began on the 1st April, and in his sorrow Lord Burghley had overlooked the change of year. More than a month after this he wrote a letter, full of grief still, to his old friend the Earl of Shrewsbury, by which we see that he was still living in retirement in one of the lodges of his park at Theobalds, as it is signed "From my poore lodge neare my howss at Theobalds, 27 Maii 1589. *P.S.* The Queene is at Barn Elms, but this night I will attend on her at Westminster, for I am no man mete for feastings."

the rulers of the Netherlands. But in his old age a series of circumstances which were impossible to have been foreseen, entirely revolutionised the political balance of Europe, and for a time led even Lord Burghley to reverse his main policy. The heavy yoke of the Guises, doubly heavy now that they had the power of Spain behind them, had at last galled to desperation the vicious Valois who ruled France. The long-foretold and carefully-planned blow which had murdered the Duke of Guise and his brother, and rid Henry of his hard taskmaster, had been followed by a combination of all French Catholicism against the royal murderer. The subjects were declared to be absolved from their allegiance to the King, Paris flew to arms, the Church thundered denunciations, and the erstwhile royal bigot and monk, the figurehead of the Catholic League, the sleepless persecutor of Protestants, found himself driven into the arms of the only subjects he had who were not ready to tear him to pieces, namely, the Huguenots and excommunicated Henry of Navarre, the legitimate heir to the throne. Together they advanced upon Paris to crush the Guisan Catholics, and wreak vengeance upon the citizens who had deposed their sovereign. Henry of Navarre had often sought and obtained Elizabeth's help against the Catholics, and looked to her again in this supreme struggle which was to decide, as it seemed, the fate of France. For the first time, however, on this occasion English aid took the form of supporting the sovereign against rebels, instead of the reverse.

In Scotland also the Catholic nobles had been busy intriguing for the landing of a Spanish force, which should coerce or depose James, and finally crush Protestantism there.[1] The plan had been discovered, and

[1] For the particulars of the Catholic plots of Huntly, Crawford, Errol, Claud Hamilton, and Bothwell (Stuart), see Spanish State Papers, Elizabeth.

Elizabeth, who had again made sure of James, had urged him to severity, and offered him support if necessary against his Catholic nobles. So that in Scotland, as in France, it was Catholicism that represented rebellion, and Protestantism in both countries looked to England to uphold legality. That the position struck Lord Burghley as curious is seen in a letter from him to Lord Shrewsbury[1] (16th June). "The world," he says, "is become very strange! We Englishmen now daily desire the prosperity of a King of France and a King of Scots. We were wont to aid the subjects oppressed against both these Kings; now we are moved to aid both these Kings against their rebellious subjects; and though these are contrary effects, yet on our part they proceed from one cause, for that we do is to weaken our enemies." In another letter he says, "Seeing both Kings are enemies to our enemies we have cause to join with them." In fact, once more for a time religious union had become stronger than national divisions. It was the Protestantism of England, France, Scotland, and Holland, led by Elizabeth, against militant Catholicism everywhere, championed by the Spanish King.

Six weeks after the above letter was written the changed position towards France was further accentuated by the murder of Henry III. at the hands of a fanatic monk in the interests of the Catholics. With the Huguenot Henry of Navarre as King of France, and with Spain as the power behind the League, England and France were pledged to the same cause. The main sources of distrust in England against France always had been the fear that the latter power might dominate Flanders or gain a footing in Scotland. James's adhesion to the Protestant party, his alliance with England, and his growing hopes of the English succession, had

[1] State Papers, Domestic.

made the latter contingency one which might now be disregarded, whilst the possession of strong places in the Netherlands in English hands, the religion of the new King of France, and his need to depend upon England for support, rendered it in the highest degree improbable that he would dream of conquering and holding Spanish Flanders against the wish of Elizabeth.

For the last three years Elizabeth had continued to supply Henry of Navarre with large sums of money to pay mercenaries; but if Henry was to reign over France he must now fight the League and Spain; and to enable him to do this, England would have to subscribe more handsomely than ever. Henry accordingly sent Beauvoir la Nocle to London to push his master's cause. Great quantities of ammunition were shipped to the coast of Normandy, whither Henry had retired with his army; but men were wanted too, and on the 17th August Beauvoir dined with the Lord Treasurer at Cecil House, and concluded an arrangement by which Elizabeth was to lend 300,000 crowns to pay for German reiters in the spring, and to make a cash advance to Henry of 70,000 crowns.

By a letter from Beauvoir in the following year (16th June 1590) it is clear that Burghley's old distrust of the French had not been overcome without difficulty. "At last," he says, "I have conquered the Lord Treasurer! Now it must be borne in mind that if the Queen says 'Do this,' and Burghley says 'Do it not,' it is he who will be obeyed. Still I find him easier and more tractable than he was; these are humours that come and go, like the wind blows. Nevertheless he does well, though he is not one of those who act up to the proverb 'Quis cito dat, bis dat.'" In the same despatch Beauvoir fervently urges the King to keep his promise with regard to the payment for the ammunition, &c.,

supplied to him. He says that the failure to meet such engagements is called in England "to play the Vidame."[1] "For God's sake," he continues, "make provision for payment, or abandon all hope of getting anything else here except on good security."[2]

Henry's first attack on Paris failed, and he was forced to retire (November 1589); but he sent the gallant old hero La Noue to Picardy to withstand the League there. When young Essex heard of his proximity he was anxious to join him.[3] From the first he had been trying to persuade the Queen to send national forces under his command to aid the Huguenots, but cautious Burghley was always at hand to hint at expense and responsibility, and the auxiliary English troops under Willoughby, now in Henry's service, were complaining bitterly of the hardships and penury they were undergoing. A great fleet also was being fitted out in Spain, the destination of which was kept secret, but rumours ran that it was coming to England, or what was almost as bad, to capture a French port in the Channel as a naval base from which the invasion of England could be effected. Brittany was held by the Duke de Mercœur for the League by Spanish aid, and already (January) overtures had been made by him to Philip to occupy a port on the coast.

[1] The Vidame de Chartres was the Huguenot agent in Elizabeth's court for some years, and was constantly craving aid for the cause. His promises of repayment were very rarely kept, as the Huguenots had most of the wealth of France against them. Hence the saying quoted.

[2] Egerton MSS., 359.

[3] "November 30. I have heard a rumour that you have arrived at Calais, and that if the enemy comes to attack that place you will be there with troops to defend it. If this news be true I pray you let me hear it from yourself, and advertise me by the ordinary courier what the enemy is doing and what you think of these designs. For I shall be very happy to see some opportunity by which we could together win honour and serve the common weal. I am idle here, and have nothing to do but to hearken for such opportunities." (Essex to La Noue; Hatfield Papers, part iii.)

But whether England was to be attacked direct or a Brittany port first taken possession of, it behoved Elizabeth to stand on her guard, and on the 15th March a great plan for the muster and mobilisation of troops all over England was issued by the Lord Treasurer.[1] On the day before the order was made in England the Huguenot King had gained the great battle of Ivry, crushing Mayenne's army and rapidly beleaguering Paris again. For the moment, therefore, Henry was able to hold his own, and the apprehension of the English Government was mainly directed towards Brittany, where a Spanish force of 4000 men were supporting the Duke de Mercœur; and the claim of Philip's daughter to the duchy, if not to the crown of France, was being advanced.

Burghley's age was now telling upon him greatly. He had become very deaf, and almost constant gout kept him crippled; but still he remained, as ever, the resource of every one with an appeal to make, a question to be decided, or an end to be served.[2] The recent death of Walsingham (April 1590) left him the only one of the Queen's early Councillors, except Crofts, who died soon afterwards, and Sir Francis Knollys,

[1] Hatfield Papers, part iv.

[2] A letter from Sir John Smith to Burghley, 28th January 1590, expresses sorrow "to hear that you were very dangerously sick, being next unto her Majesty, in my opinion, the pillar and upholder of the Commonwealth. Howbeit, I am now very glad to hear you have recovered your health;" to which the Lord Treasurer appends the note "relatio falsæ" (Hatfield Papers, part iv.). Later in the year, however (October), the Clerk of the Privy Seal, writing to Lord Talbot, says, "I never knew my Lord Treasurer more lusty or fresh in hue than at this hour." How heavily business still pressed upon the Lord Treasurer is seen by a remark of his in a letter to Mr. Grimstone (January 1591): "The cause" (of his not having written) "is partly for that I have not leisure, being, as it were, roundly besieged with affairs to be answered from north, south, east, and west; whereof I hope shortly to be delivered by supply of some to take charge as her Majesty's principal secretary" (Bacon Papers, Birch).

whose fanatical Puritanism and anti-Prelatism still gave much trouble to the Treasurer. The latter had evidently marked out his brilliant younger son Robert Cecil for Walsingham's successor; and certainly no better choice could have been made, for he had for some time past relieved his father of some of his most laborious work, and had imbibed much of his policy and method. The mere hint of such an intention, however, was sufficient to arouse the opposition of Essex, who, either out of generosity or in a mere spirit of contradiction of "the Cecils," took up the cause of Davison, and endeavoured to bring him back to office.[1] The Lord Treasurer was powerful enough to prevent that; but did not push the matter to extremes by obtaining the appointment of his own son until some years afterwards, although Robert Cecil was knighted (May 1591) and was sworn a Member of the Privy Council shortly afterwards (August 1591), and thereafter practically discharged much of the duty of Secretary of State.[2] Burghley has frequently been blamed for a want of generosity towards Davison at this juncture. He was, as we have had occasion to notice more than once, not a generous man;

[1] Soon afterwards, Essex was at issue with Robert Cecil about the appointment of a successor to one of Heneage's offices (Essex to Sir Henry Unton; Hatfield Papers, part iv.). How bitter Essex was against the Cecils is shown by a letter from him to Sir Henry Unton in Paris (June 1591): "Things do remain in the same state as they did. They who are most in appetite are not yet satisfied, whereof there is great discontentment. If it stand at this stay awhile longer they will despair, *for their chief hour-glass hath little sand left in it, and doth run out still.*"

[2] In one of the letters suggested by the secret intelligence secretary, Phillips, to be written to English Catholics abroad (31st August 1591), Robert Cecil's appointment to the Council is noted; "but the Queen seems determined against Robert Cecil for the Secretaryship; but my Lord being sick, the whole management of the Secretary's place is in his (Robert's) hands, and as he is already a Councillor, any employment of him between the Queen and his father will be the means of installing him in the place" (State Papers, Domestic).

but this was a crucial trial of strength between him and young Essex, and if Davison had been reappointed Secretary of State the influence of Burghley would have suffered irreparably. It was obvious now that Essex was determined, if possible, to force Elizabeth into an aggressive policy, especially against Spain, and it was exactly this policy which Burghley still devoted his life to opposing. But it is clear that the Treasurer did not gain his point with regard to Davison without some little trouble. Whilst the matter was in dispute he pleaded his age and infirmities as a reason for his complete retirement from office;[1] and such a hint always brought the Queen to her bearings.

He, however, absented himself from court and stayed in dudgeon at Theobalds, where the Queen, to pacify him, paid him a stately visit in May, and the notes at Hatfield in the Lord Treasurer's writing show that on this occasion, as usual, the smallest details of the Queen's reception were arranged by him. Whilst there the Queen appears to have written the extraordinary jocose letter to "The disconsolate and retired spryte, the hermite of Tyboll," in which, with tedious and affected jocularity, Hatton, in her name, exhorts him to return to the world and his duty. He must have done so promptly, for he was with the court at Greenwich again as busy as ever

[1] He expressed this wish as soon as Essex's opposition to Robert Cecil's appointment became manifest. A letter (State Papers, Domestic) from Hatton, 15th July 1590, thus refers to the matter: "We can well witness your endless travails, which in her Majesty's princely consideration she should relieve you of; but it is true the affairs are in good hands, as we all know, and thereby her Majesty is the more sure, and we her poor servants the better satisfied. God send you help and happiness to your better contentment." Nearly all through 1590 and 1591 repeated reference is made in his correspondence to Burghley's infirmities. This, added to the everlasting disputes between the Prelatists and the Puritans, in which he was between two fires, and the galling opposition of Essex to his son's appointment, might well have excused his desire to be relieved of his heavy burden.

in a fortnight, writing to Mr. Grimstone, the agent in France, a letter (June), which shows that already the old distrust of French methods was reasserting itself. "In truth, her Majesty findeth some lack that the King doth not advertise her more frequently of his actions and intentions; and especially she findeth it strange that there is no more care had for the state of Brittany, in that the King sendeth no greater forces thither to encounter the Spaniards' new descents, or to recover such port towns as be of most moment. And her Majesty is truly comforted with certain successes that have happened in Brittany since the arrival (there) of Sir John Norreys."[1] The letter ends with an emphatic reminder of Henry's obligations to Elizabeth, and a somewhat doubting hope that he will be properly grateful.

Henry naturally was for winning Paris, the head-quarters of the League and the capital of his realm, and he was already giving pause to Elizabeth and Burghley by his willingness to "receive instruction" from priests, with a view to his conversion. What from the English point of view was most to be feared was that he might at last be forced or cajoled into consenting to a partition of France, in which the Infanta's claim to the Duchy of Brittany, which was a very strong one, should be acknowledged. This would have brought the Spaniards into the Channel opposite England, and have completely altered the balance of power. Already Don Juan del Aguila had a firm grip upon the port of Blavet, and Elizabeth's Government were pressing Henry to direct his attention to the north of France, where the League had occupied

[1] Bacon Papers, Birch. Sir John Norris had recently gone to Brittany with a small English auxiliary force, and had captured Guingamp. There were also 600 Englishmen in Normandy and an English squadron on the Brittany coast. Burghley holds out hopes also of sending 600 more men to Brittany.

most of the principal ports, except Dieppe. Henry himself was reducing Chartres and other places near Paris, whilst his officers in the north, with inadequate forces, were doing their best to recover the coast towns.

At the urgent desire of Elizabeth, Henry promised to come to Normandy,[1] and Essex prevailed upon the Queen to give him command of a considerable English force to besiege Rouen[2] (July). The young Earl was in semi-disgrace in consequence of his recent marriage with Walsingham's daughter (Sir Philip Sidney's widow), but the Queen gave him strict orders not to expose himself to danger. Henry, however, did not keep his word to meet Essex on the coast, and as soon as Essex landed, made an attempt to utilise the English force elsewhere. Essex was indignant, and rushed off to Noyon to remonstrate with Henry.[3] When, however, Rouen was at last besieged, he violated the Queen's commands and took an active part in the siege.[4]

[1] Henry wrote one of his clever characteristic letters to Elizabeth (5th August), expressing in fervent terms his delight at hearing of her intention of coming to Portsmouth during his visit to Normandy. He swears eternal gratitude, and begs her to allow him to run across the Channel; "et baiser les mains comme Roi de Navarre, et etre aupres d'elle deux heures, a fin que j'aie ce bien d'avoir veu, au moins une fois, en ma vie, celle a qui j'ai consacré et corps et tant ce que j'aurai jamais; et que j'aime et révère plus que chose que soit au monde." Referring to Essex's force, he says: "Le secours que qu'il vous a pleu à présent m'accorder m'est en singulière grace, pour la qualité de celluy auquel vous avez donné la principale charge, et pour la belle force dont il est composé." (Hatfield Papers, part iv.)

[2] The Earl's brother, Walter Devereux, was killed in the siege.

[3] Essex seems to have quarrelled with every one in France, and the Council in England condemned his proceedings from the first. In a letter to the Council (September) he says the whole purport of their letters is "to rip up all my actions and to reprove them" (Hatfield Papers, part iv.). The Queen also wrote him a very angry letter (4th October) consenting on strict conditions that the English shall only be allowed to remain a month longer in France.

[4] From a long letter from Burghley (22nd October), Essex appears to have again left his command and run over to England. He begged Burghley to ask the Queen's permission for him to join Biron at the siege of Caudebec.

At length Elizabeth declared that she would be played with no longer by him, and he was forced to return to his infuriated mistress,[1] whilst the siege of Rouen dragged on for months longer, sometimes in the presence of Henry himself, until the arrival of Parma and Mayenne caused it to be abandoned (May 1592). The anger of the Queen with Essex and the war-party was increased by the ill success in the autumn (1591) of the attempt to intercept the Spanish treasure fleet off the Azores;[2] and for a time "the Cecils" had their way, which was to administer just so much aid, and no more, as should prevent Maurice of Nassau in Holland and Henry of Navarre in France from succumbing to the power of Spain, whilst the Queen in the meanwhile railed at Navarre for his shiftiness, and at Essex for his disobedience. Her Englishmen, she said, had been badly treated and exposed to undue hardships, her advances were unpaid, nobody was grateful to her; and in future she declared, that though Henry might have her prayers he should have no more of her money.

The Lord Treasurer says he had not done so, as he was sure the Queen would refuse. Her strict orders were that neither Essex nor his men should risk themselves at the siege of Havre or elsewhere except by her orders. Essex appears to have disobeyed, and returned to France at once without seeing the Queen. During his absence the Englishmen had deserted wholesale. Burghley says there were not 2000 of them remaining—they were unpaid and mutinous, and, according to Biron and Leighton, were committing outrages on all sides. Beauvoir de Nocle wrote to Essex as soon as he had gone back to France (22nd October), "Les courroux de la reine redoublent."

[1] See the Queen's very angry letter peremptorily recalling him (24th December 1591), (Hatfield Papers, part iv.).

[2] The heroic but unprofitable result of the expedition was the famous fight of the *Revenge* and the death of Sir Richard Grenville, who quite needlessly, and out of sheer obstinacy, engaged the whole Spanish squadron. The great difficulty of getting the expedition together is seen by the large number of towns which addressed Lord Burghley personally or the Council, begging on the score of poverty to be excused from fitting the ships, as they had been commanded to do. Southampton, Hull, Yarmouth, Newcastle, and other towns professed to be so decayed as to be quite unable to contribute ships (Hatfield Papers, part iv.).

The determined efforts of Essex and his party, and more especially of the two Bacons, Francis and Antony, to wound and discredit the Cecils, stopped at no inconsistency. From their earliest childhood the Earl and the Bacons had been attached to the Puritan party, and still posed as its champions; and yet they were the first to endeavour to cast upon Burghley the odium of the severe proclamation and fresh persecution of the seminary priests that had been considered necessary.[1] From the action of Allen, Persons, and their friends at the time of the Armada, from the letters intercepted by Burghley disclosing the Jesuit plot in Scotland, and from the continued bitter writings of Person's directed against Elizabeth and her minister, it was beyond question now, that whatever may have been the case at the beginning of their propaganda, the aim of the seminarists was simply to undermine and overturn the political government of the country.[2] And yet the Bacons, nephews of Burghley

[1] The reports of spies of plots in Flanders at the time amply justified the precautionary measures taken. Burghley was still appealed to by both religious parties, and he appears at this time to have been claimed by both. In March 1591 one of the spy-letters suggested by Phillips to be sent abroad mentions Burghley's feud with Archbishop Whitgift and his favour to the Puritans. The Catholic spy in Flanders, Snowdon, in June of the same year, says that the *anti-Spanish* English Catholic refugees there, Lord Vaux, Sir T. Tresham, Mr. Talbot, and Mr. Owen were opposed to the plots then in progress. "It is said amongst them that if occasion be offered they will requite the relaxation now afforded them by his Lordship's (Burghley's) moderation, for it is noted that since the cause of the Catholics came to his arbitrament things have gone on with wonderful suavity (State Papers, Dom.). On the other hand, Phillips (in July) tells another spy, St. Mains, of the extravagances of the fanatics, Hacket, Coppinger, and Ardington, and speaks of Burghley as being on the side of the Puritans.

[2] In a spirited reply (Hatfield Papers) to a remonstrance of Antony Standen, Lord Burghley insists that Catholics who were punished by death in England are "only those who profess themselves by obedience to the Pope to be no subjects of the Queen; and though their outward pretence be to be sent from the seminaries to convert people to their religion, yet without reconciling them from their obedience to the Queen they never give them absolution." Those, he says, who still retain their allegiance to the Queen, but simply

and sons of a fiercely Puritan mother, prompted by the double spy Standen and men of the same evil class, almost violently took up the cause of the persecuted Catholics when they thought it would injure the kinsman to whom they owed so much, and his son, of whom they were jealous.[1]

The renewed severity against the seminarists at this time was certainly not without justification. The shifty James Stuart was again listening to the charming of his Catholic nobles and the agents of Spain, though doubtless with the intention of outwitting them, and from all sides came the news of a powerful fleet being prepared in the Spanish ports either for England, Scotland, or Ireland. For a time in the autumn of 1592, whilst Lord Burghley was accompanying Elizabeth through the southern counties,[2] a perfect panic of apprehension fell upon the people; partly, it must be confessed,

absent themselves from churches, are only fined in accordance with the law. The same contention is more elaborately stated in Lord Burghley's essay on "The Execution of Justice." The examinations of various spies, giving alarming accounts of the plots in Flanders at this time to kill the Queen and Burghley (State Papers, Domestic), afford ample proof that Lord Burghley's contention as to the aims of the Spanish seminarists was correct.

[1] Francis Bacon frankly confessed that he adhered to Burghley's enemies because he thought it would be for his own personal advantage as well as for that of the State; and his brother Antony writes (Bacon Papers): "On the one side, I found nothing but fair words, which make fools fain, and yet even in those no offer or hopeful assistance of real kindness, which I thought I might justly expect at the Lord Treasurer's hands, who had inned my ten years' harvest into his own barn."

[2] It was during this progress at Oxford that the circumstance thus related by Sir J. Harrington happened: "I may not forget how the Queen in the midst of her oration casting her eye aside, and seeing the old Lord Treasurer standing on his lame feet for want of a stool, she called in all haste for a stool for him; nor would she proceed in her speech till she saw him provided. Then she fell to it again as if there had been no interruption." Harrington says that some one (probably Essex) twitted her for doing this on purpose to show off her Latin.

caused by the fear of reprisals for the ceaseless ravages of the English upon Spanish shipping. Burghley himself had always been opposed to these ravages,[1] and had steadily refused to accept any share in the profits of them; but when the prizes were brought back he took care that the Queen's share was not forgotten. A good instance of this occurred in 1592. Ralegh and the Earl of Cumberland with some associates fitted out a powerful expedition to intercept the treasure galleons, and, if possible, to raid some of the Spanish settlements. When the squadron had sailed, Ralegh was suddenly recalled by the angry Queen and thrown into the Tower (May) for having married.

The *Roebuck*, Ralegh's own ship, captured off Flores amongst other prizes the great carrack *Madre de Dios*, which reached Dartmouth on the 8th September. The riches she contained were beyond calculation; pearls, amber, musk, and precious stones, tapestries, silks, spices, and gold formed her cargo. Plunder began long before she reached England, and when the news came of the capture the great road to the west was crowded by Jew dealers, London tradesmen and fine ladies and gentlemen on their way to buy bargains. Ralegh's sailors were already sulky at the imprisonment of their beloved master, and when attempts were made by the shore authorities to recover some of the plunder and prevent further peculation, they became unmanageable. Sir John Hawkins wrote to Lord Burghley that Ralegh was the only man who could bring them to order.[2] But Ralegh was in the Tower, "the Queen's poor prisoner"; and it needed all the Lord Treasurer's

[1] Writing to Archibald Douglas advising him how to excuse as well as he might the depredations of Scotsmen on Danish shipping, he says in a postscript, "I write not this in favour of piracies, for I hate all pirates mortally" (Hatfield Papers, part iv.).

[2] Lansdowne MSS., lxx.

influence, working on Elizabeth's greed, to obtain permission for Sir Walter, still under guard, to go down to Devonshire and set matters straight.[1] Preceding him by a few hours on the same errand went Sir Robert Cecil, whose letters to his father on his journey, detailing the measures he had adopted on the way to intercept the plunder, are extremely graphic and interesting.[2]

Such depredations upon Spanish shipping as this—and they were of constant occurrence—although they might enrich the adventurers, and to some extent even the Queen, were a means of keeping the English people generally in a constant state of apprehension, and rendering legitimate commerce dangerous and difficult. As we have seen, Lord Burghley had steadily set his face against piracy of all sorts, and Sir Robert Cecil followed his lead. Ralegh had from his first appearance at court been a friend of the Cecils, as against Leicester and Essex, and he still remained on their side; but he was greedy and unscrupulous, and certainly from the time of the capture of the great carrack the cordiality between the Cecil party and himself diminished.[3] The talk of the court generally was that Burghley was jealous of the rise of all men who might compete with his

[1] Lansdowne MSS., lxx., and Hatfield Papers, part iv.

[2] Through the whole of the autumn and winter Lord Burghley was busy in the liquidation and division of the vast plunder brought in the carrack. Ralegh had risked every penny he possessed, and came out a loser. The Queen got the lion's share, and the adventurers, with the exception of Ralegh, received large bonuses.

[3] One of Thomas Phillips' suggested spy-letters to be sent abroad (22nd March 1591) says that although the Puritan party is the weaker, Essex has made Ralegh join him in their favour. Ralegh's Puritan birth and breeding naturally gave him sympathy for Essex's party, whilst his active temperament and his greed made him in favour of war, especially with Spain. His only tie with the Cecils was his early political connection. Though he was usually in personal enmity with Essex, his natural bent was therefore more in sympathy with Essex's party than with that to which he was supposed to be attached.

beloved son Robert; and Ralegh's friend Spenser puts the thought in verse ("The Ruins of Time") thus:—

> "O grief of griefs! O gall of all good hearts!
> To see that virtue should despisèd be
> Of him that first was raised for virtuous parts,
> And now broad spreading like an agèd tree,
> Lets none shoot up that nigh him planted be."

That Lord Burghley in his failing age should desire to continue his policy through his son was perfectly natural, especially as in his case the son was in every way worthy to succeed him; and it is not fair to blame him for mean filial jealousy to the detriment of Ralegh, as Spenser does, for Ralegh, although nominally his adherent, was in the matter of the Puritans and aggressive action against Spain, acting rather on the side of Essex. It is to this fact that Ralegh owed his life-long disappointment at being excluded from the Privy Council.

That Essex and his party were sleepless in their attempts to undermine the influence of the Cecils there is abundant evidence to prove. Amongst many others, an interesting letter from Ralph Lane to Lord Burghley (March 1592) may be quoted.[1] Sir Thomas Cecil and his more brilliant younger brother had quarrelled whilst their father was staying in retirement at Theobalds, sick and sorry. "The world speaks of your Lordship's grief," writes Lane, "and thinks it proceeds from the differences between your two sons. The matter is not great, but the humours short. That which grieves your well-wishers, who are the true well-wishers of her Majesty and the State, is that it has been misrepresented to her Majesty so as to injure you for credit and wisdom, and that these hard constructions made against you to her are the principal cause of your own grief. Good men moan

[1] State Papers, Domestic.

that her Majesty is sought to be deprived in this dangerous time of so wise and approved a Councillor. I hope that no envy will make her Majesty disconceit a personage the choice of whom in the beginning of her reign prognosticated her future greatness."

But Elizabeth, though she might listen to the youngsters who sought to contemn her aged Councillor, knew his worth better than they, and much as he desired rest, when it came to the pinch, she always refused to let him go. Only a few days after the above letter was written, indeed, Lord Burghley received a life-grant of Rockingham Forest, part of the lands of the deceased Lord Chancellor Bromley, as if in answer to the detractions of his enemies. Another instance of the dependence of the Queen upon him and of his devotion to his duty happened in June. He had gone to Bath to seek alleviation from the gout which had afflicted him all the spring, and writes from there to the Queen, who was on her progress, enclosing her an important letter from her Ambassador in France. "I would," he says, "have attended your Majesty myself with it, but I am in the midst of my cure and may not break off without special harm and frustrating my recovery, which is promised in a few days. But still I will risk all, and come if your Majesty desires it."[1]

[1] Numerous similar instances of this devotion occur in the letters of Burghley to his son and others. In April 1594 he writes to Sir Robert from Cecil House, that as her Majesty desires to have him there (Greenwich) to-day, he will go, if it be her pleasure that he should leave his other engagements. He then recounts his various duties for the day, including sitting all the morning in the Court of Wards, "with small ease and much pain," and again in the afternoon; the next day he had to preside in the Exchequer Chamber, the Star Chamber, &c.; "but if her Majesty wishes I will leave all. I live in pain, yet spare not to occupy myself for her Majesty." In July he writes to his son, "I can affirm nothing of my amendment, but if my attendance shall be earnestly required I will wear out my time at court as well as where I am" (State Papers, Domestic). How great and generally

The persistent attacks upon Burghley and his policy were not confined to Essex and the Puritans. The Spanish Jesuit party in Flanders, which in former years had often looked upon him with sympathy and sometimes with hope, now cast upon him the responsibility of everything that happened in England, even when the policy was dictated by Burghley's opponents. In all the plots of Holt, Yorke, Archer, Cahill, and the rest of the desperadoes in Flanders, Burghley was one of the principal objects of attack. "He was but a blood-sucker," said Yorke; and the latter swore he would lay a poisoned glowing coal in his way and kill him.[1] Burghley, he said, had poisoned the young Earl of Derby in order to marry his grand-daughter to the Earl's brother. "England was governed by the Machivellian policy of those who would be kings, and whom it is time were cut off;"[2] and much more of the same sort. These grosser calumnies and accusations of corruption[3] were in most cases obviously false, and could hardly have caused Lord Burghley very deep concern; but the most artful of his enemies, Father Persons, well

recognised his influence still was is seen by the depositions of what disaffected persons said of him. Prestall (Kinnersley's deposition, State Papers, Domestic, 1591) said "the Lord Treasurer was the wizard of England, a worldling wishing to fill his own purse, and good for nobody; so hated that he would not live long if anything happened to the Queen." "The Treasurer led the Queen and Council, and only cared about enriching himself."

[1] Declarations of Kinnersley, Young, and Walpole (1594), State Papers, Domestic.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] In accordance with the practice of the time Burghley doubtless received presents from suitors for office and others (see State Papers, Domestic); but it is on record that he frequently refused such offerings when they assumed the form of bribes to influence judicial decisions or questions of account. Above all, there is no proof that he accepted any bribes from Spain, even when almost every other Councillor of the Queen was paid by one side or the other. Several mentions are made in the Spanish State Papers of the advisability of paying him heavily, and even sums were allotted for the purpose; but I have not found a single statement of his having accepted such payments; although in after years his son certainly did so.

knew the weak point in his armour, and wounded him to the quick in his books, in which he pretended to show that the Lord Treasurer was of base origin, his father a tavern-keeper, and he himself a bell-ringer.[1] We have seen in a former similar case that attacks upon his ancestry almost alone aroused Lord Burghley's anger; and an anti-Spanish Catholic writing at the time (January 1593) records how deeply he was pained by the books of Persons and Verstegen just published, "which," he says, "will do the Catholics no good."

The division, indeed, between the two parties of Catholics was now well defined. Those who adhered to Spain and the Jesuits were of course bitterly inimical to moderate statesmen like the Cecils, whose efforts would naturally tend to bring about a compromise with James or Arabella Stuart for the Queen's successor, peace with Spain, and toleration for Catholics. The Vatican, the French, the Venetians, and many of the English and Scottish Catholics abroad were in favour of this solution;[2] and the English Catholic secular clergy were enlisted almost entirely on the same side. The extreme parties, however, were naturally violently opposed to compromise of any sort; so that the Cecils, as leaders of the peaceful and moderate party, were the target for envenomed attacks at the same time both of Spanish Jesuits, who wished for a purely Catholic England under

[1] Francis Bacon answered the book in an able pamphlet published the same year (1592), called "Observations upon a Libel published in the Present Year," in which Lord Burghley and Sir Robert Cecil are very highly lauded.

[2] One of the loyal English Catholics, St. Mains, writing (January 1593) to Fitzherbert, says that "the Lord Treasurer has been dangerously ill, but is now well recovered, thanks be to God; for the whole state of the realm depends upon him. If he go, there is not one about the Queen able to wield the State as it stands." The principal Catholic refugees against Spain at this period were Charles Paget, William Gifford, the Treshams, Hugh Griffith, Dr. Lewis, Bishop of Cassano, the Scottish Carthusian Bishop of Dunblane, Thor[illegible] Morgan, Thomas Hesketh, Nicholas Fitzherbert, &c.

Spanish auspices, and the militant Protestant party led by Essex, who aimed at a purely Protestant England and an aggressive war with Spain.

The bitterness of party feeling was promptly demonstrated at the meeting of Parliament in February. Intelligence of continued armaments in Spain, and the recent revelations of informers as to the anti-English plots hatched in Flanders, had rendered necessary the employment of large sums for the national defence. A statement of the apprehensions entertained was made in the House of Lords by the Lord Keeper Puckering, and in the Commons by Sir Robert Cecil, the substance of both speeches having been previously drafted by Lord Burghley. The patriotism of the members was appealed to in fervent terms to provide funds for maintaining the national independence. The Puritan party, aided by Ralegh, fanned the flame and sought to pledge the Houses to an offensive war; and with but little dissent a treble subsidy was voted, payable in four years. Francis Bacon[1] struck a discordant note by asking that the payments should extend over six years. The people were poor, he said, and hard pressed; do not arouse their discontent "and set an evil precedent against ourselves and our posterity." Sir Robert Cecil somewhat indignantly answered his cousin's speech, and the Queen and Lord Treasurer soon made their displeasure felt, and Francis Bacon could only protest his loyalty and sorrow for his offence. If only he could wound the Cecils and bring himself into the good graces of Essex, he seemed to care but little.

The House of Commons, as usual, had a strongly

[1] Francis was member for Middlesex, whilst his brother Antony sat for Wallingford. The Queen remained angry with Francis for many months. It was only in September that Essex with the greatest difficulty obtained permission for him to appear at court (Bacon Papers, Birch).

Puritan leaven, and the indefatigable Peter Wentworth once more incurred the Queen's anger by bringing forward the succession question. Whilst the Puritan leaders in the Commons were being sent to the Tower and the Fleet,[1] the bishops were preparing a blow which should demolish for good all attempts at attacks against the Establishment. A new extreme sect called Independents or Brownists had gained considerable popularity. Other Nonconformists resisted the orders of the Church, and opposed the authority of prelates, but the Brownists were for disestablishment altogether. Their leaders, Barrow and Greenwood, and several others, were in prison; but their followers were many, and growing in number, and the prelates were determined to stamp out this new danger to the Church, come what might. Several Brownists were arraigned for sedition, on the ground that attacks upon the Establishment were attacks upon the Queen. Barrow and Greenwood were found guilty, and condemned to death. During the prosecution the prelates in the Lords had passed a severe bill against recusancy, designed to press more hardly against Brownists than even against Catholics. On the 31st March the condemned men were dragged to Tyburn, with all the hideous formalities usual in executions for felony; and when the ropes were already around their necks, a reprieve suddenly arrived. Lord Burghley himself, though seriously ill, had insisted upon a suspension of the sentence. "No Papist," he said, "had suffered for religion, and Protestants' blood should not

[1] Morice was sent to Tutbury Castle and kept there in prison for some years for making a speech in this Parliament complaining of the grievances of the Puritans. Wentworth was sent to the Tower, and Stevens and Walsh to the Fleet. Puckering, the Lord Keeper, told the House that the Queen had not called it together to make new laws; there were more than enough already. "It is, therefore, her Majesty's pleasure that no time be spent therein" (D'Ewes).

be the first shed, at least before an attempt was made to convince them." We are told also that he spoke sharply to the Archbishop (Whitgift). The recusants bill went to the lower House on the 4th April, and Ralegh amongst others made a vigorous speech against it. The opposition in the Commons, we are told,[1] hardened the prelates' hearts, and both Barrow and Greenwood suffered the last penalty two days afterwards, to be followed in their martyrdom for Protestant Nonconformity by many others all over the country.

This case has been stated here somewhat at length, because it has become usual to cast upon Lord Burghley the odium for cruel persecution both of Catholics and Protestants, in disregard of the fact that there were in England two extreme parties struggling with each other, he being, so far as religion was concerned, a moderator between the two. He was, of course, the most prominent man in the Government, but he only maintained his influence by avoiding the extremes of both parties, and in order to do this he was obliged to refrain from running strongly counter to either. It may be said that in this case of the Brownists, as well as that of the Catholics, he might have firmly put his foot down and have prevented the sacrifice; but in that event he would not have been William Cecil, Lord Burghley, and he would not have held the tiller of the State for forty years.

In the summer, Essex received a strange and powerful coadjutor in his policy of aggressive war against Spain. He and his friends the Bacons, much to the Puritan Lady Bacon's concern, were already deep in confidence with Standen, and other double spies and professed Catholics, the object apparently being to organise, for the benefit of Essex, a separate spy system,

[1] Phillips' suggestions to Sterrell (State Papers, Domestic).

independent of the universal network controlled by the Cecils. The new recruit to Essex was a man of a very different calibre to the other instruments. Antonio Perez, the former all-powerful minister of Philip II., was at deadly feud with his master, and had been welcomed at the court of France as the bitterest enemy of his native country. He was one of the most brilliant and fascinating scoundrels that ever lived, and soon won the good graces of the jolly Béarnais, who was already meditating what he called the "mortal leap" of going to Mass, and turning the Huguenot Navarre into the Catholic King of France, eldest son of the Church. He had depended much upon Elizabeth's help; although of late that had been slackening as Essex's influence waned, and he knew that the step he was about to take would turn her full fury upon him. Who could so plausibly plead his cause and inflame the hearts in England against Spain as this mordant foe of Philip, who knew every weakness, every secret, of his former master? So in June, Perez went to England with Henry's blessing, and with the cold permission of Elizabeth, for she had no love for traitors, and Burghley knew Perez's errand.

When he arrived he found Elizabeth already fuming at Henry's apostasy, and complaining bitterly to Beauvoir de Nocle of his master's ingratitude.[1] She refused absolutely to receive the "Spanish traitor," and the cautious Cecils gave him a wide berth. Essex in some

[1] Elizabeth seems to have received the first hint of his intention in May, and Lord Burghley sends an indignant letter to his son about it (26th May). He ends by saying, "If I may not have some leisure to cure my head, I shall shortly ease it in my grave; and yet if her Majesty mislike my absence, I will come thither" (Hatfield Papers, part iv.). See also letters of Sir Thomas Edmunds (State Papers, France, Record Office); and Elizabeth's curious letters to Henry (July), signed, "Votre tres assurée sœur si ce soit à la vielle mode: avec la nouvelle je n'ay qui faire, E. R." (Hatfield Papers).

notes to Phillips, soon after Perez's arrival, directs him to set informers to work to discover the real reason of the Spaniard's coming. Lord Burghley, he says, has seen him once, and the Earl of Essex twice. "Burghley only wished to compare his judgment with his own experience; but he (Essex) wished to found upon Perez some action, for all his plots are to make war offensive rather than defensive."[1] Essex soon got over his doubts, and plausible Perez stood with Bacon[2] ever at his right hand, living at his cost, writing his biting gibes, weaving his plots against Philip, and with his matchless ability and experience advising the young Earl how best to drag England into war with Spain, even though Henry was a Catholic, and so to outwit the watchful Cecils. It was not long, too, before he flattered and wormed himself into the good graces of the Queen, who gave him a handsome pension; and so gradually the war-party gained ground in Elizabeth's councils, for in this Ralegh too was on the side of Essex, and the ceaseless talk of the intrigues of the Jesuits kept the English war feeling at fever heat.

Most of the routine work formerly falling upon Lord Burghley was now undertaken by his son. Letters from all quarters, and upon all subjects, came to Sir Robert, whose diligence must have been almost as indefatigable as that of his father; but apparently only those of special importance and touching foreign affairs were submitted to the Lord Treasurer. But

[1] State Papers, Domestic.

[2] How deeply Lady Bacon resented her son's friendship with Perez is seen in a letter of hers to Francis Bacon: "I pity your brother; but yet so long as he pities not himself, but keepeth that bloody Perez, yea, a court companion and a bed companion—a proud, profane, costly fellow, whose being about him I verily believe the Lord God doth mislike, and doth the less bless your brother in credit and in health. Such wretches as he is never loved your brother, but for his credit, living upon him" (Bacon Papers, Birch).

though Sir Robert might be diligent, he certainly lacked the high sense of dignity which had always been characteristic of his father. At a time when courtiers vied with each other in addressing almost blasphemous flattery to the Queen, when all the firmament was ransacked to provide comparisons favourable to her Majesty's beauty and wisdom, Lord Burghley, although always respectful and deferential to the Queen, never sacrificed his dignity to please her.

That his son was more of a supple courtier than he, is seen by the address penned by him to be delivered to the Queen by a man dressed as a hermit on her entrance to Theobalds, where she passed some days on a visit to the Lord Treasurer, in October. For turgid affectation and grovelling humility this production could hardly be excelled by the egregious Simier, or Hatton himself. The subject evidently has reference to the Queen's previous visit to the house when Lord Burghley was in deep trouble and living in retirement. On that occasion there was much affected verbosity about the Lord Treasurer as a hermit, and in October 1593, when the pretended hermit addressed her Majesty, he reminded her that the last time she came, "his founder, upon a strange conceit to feed his own humour, had placed the hermit, contrary to his profession, in his house, whilst he (Burghley) had retired to the hermit's poor cell." Whilst his founder (Burghley) lived he was assured that he would not again dispossess him (as he never turned out tenants) "Only this perplexeth my soul, and causeth cold blood in every vein, to see the life of my founder so often in peril, nay, his desire as hasty as his age to inherit his tomb. But this I hear (which is his greatest comfort), that when his body, being laden with years, oppressed with sickness, having spent his strength in the public service, desireth to be rid of worldly cares, even when he is grievously

sick and lowest brought, what holds him back and ransometh him, is the fear that my young master may wish to use my cell. And therefore, hearing of all the country folks I meet, that your Majesty doth use him in your service, as in former time you have done his father, my founder, and that though his experience and judgment be not comparable, yet as report goeth he hath something in him like the child of such a parent," he (the hermit) begs the Queen, whose will is law, to bid Robert Cecil to continue in active life, and leave to the hermit the cell granted to him by his father.

This was doubtless considered at the time a highly ingenious device for asking the Queen for a reversion of the fathers' offices for the son, and is certainly not lacking in the worldly wisdom which looks ahead; but surely never was any man's coming death talked about so much in his lifetime, and with so little constraint, as that of Lord Burghley.[2]

[1] Nichols' Progresses, vol. iii.

[2] Burghley appears to have been very dangerously ill a few weeks afterwards at Windsor. Essex's spy Standen wrote to his friend Antony Bacon (6th November) that he had gone up to the Lord Treasurer's lodging to inquire after his health; but was refused admittance by the servants, who told him, however, that his Lordship had rested better than on the previous night. Whilst Standen "was going down the stairs, the Queen was at my back, who, unknown to me, had been visiting my Lord, so I stayed among the rest to see her Majesty pass. A little while after I met Mr. Cooke, who told me, that true it was that my Lord had somewhat rested the night past; but that this morning his Lordship had a very rigorous fit of pain, and dangerous" (Bacon Papers, Birch). We hear from the same source of similar attacks in December and January following.

CHAPTER XVI

1594–1598

ALL through the year 1593 Lord Burghley's agents in Spain had sent news of the powerful naval preparations being made at Pasages, Coruña, and elsewhere, and the war-party at home and abroad had strained every nerve to induce the Queen to assume the offensive. Raleigh,[1] Drake, and Hawkins supported Essex in his efforts; but the caution of "the Cecils," the Queen, and the Lord Admiral restrained, as well as might be, the ardour of the forward party.

There were, indeed, many elements of danger near home which amply justified a cautious policy. James Stuart's extraordinary lenity to the Catholic lords who had rebelled against him, and his known dallying with Spain and Rome, again suggested the possibility of a Spanish invasion of England over the Border, simultaneously with a rising of Catholics in England. The almost complete control of the coast of Brittany by the Spaniards, their recent seizure and fortification of a strong position in Brest harbour, and their continued intrigues in Ireland, all pointed to the aggressive policy against this country which Philip's newly reorganised fleet enabled him to adopt. What would have caused but modified alarm to England a few years before, became much more terrible now that Henry IV. had

[1] "I hope you will remember," wrote Raleigh to Howard, "that it is the Queen's honour and safety to assail rather than to defend" (Hatfield Papers).

become a Catholic and was making peace with the League. Elizabeth and her trusted advisers, therefore, kept Drake and Hawkins at home, and with the exception of sending Frobisher and Norris in the autumn of 1594 to oust the Spaniards from Brest harbour,[1] stood on the defensive.

Essex, often in temporary disgrace with the Queen, headstrong and inexperienced, was no match in diplomacy for Robert Cecil, fortified by the experience and sagacity of his father; but he had enlisted in his service some of the cleverest and most unscrupulous spies and agents to aid him. Wherever the Queen had an ambassador, or the Cecils an agent, Essex also had a man to represent his interest. Every envoy that came from James Stuart or Henry IV. to ask for aid which the Cecils considered it imprudent to give under the circumstances, was received by Essex and his friends with open arms; and counter intrigues were carried on through them against the policy of Lord Burghley. In Scotland, Holland, and France, it was Essex who posed as the friend at the expense of the Cecils.[2]

It had been to a considerable extent owing to the diplomacy of Antonio Perez that Henry IV. had decided to come to terms with the League, in order that the united forces of France might be opposed to the Spaniards. It was now Perez's secret mission from the French King, with the aid of Essex, to exacerbate English feeling against Spain nationally, and to pledge

[1] Frobisher was mortally wounded in the assault.

[2] See the extraordinary letters of Foulis, Cockburn, and other Scottish agents, to Bacon, &c., in the Bacon Papers (Birch). "Mr Bowes, the English Ambassador here (in Scotland), is very much scandalised at the behaviour of Crato (*i.e.* Burghley) and his son towards me, and assures me he will remonstrate with the Queen at his return," writes Foulis to Bacon (Bacon Papers); and similar expressions in the letters of other French and Scotch agents show clearly that Essex took care to cultivate the idea that it was only the Cecils who prevented the adoption of a generous policy towards them.

Elizabeth to help him against the common enemy, independently of the question of religion. This would have been a distinct departure from the traditional policy of England, which had usually been to stand aloof whilst the two great rivals were fighting; and only the attachment of the King of France to the Protestant cause had for a time altered this policy. Elizabeth's interests in France, now that Henry was a Catholic, were limited to preventing the permanent establishment of the Spanish power on the north coast opposite England, and to that end the Cecils directed their efforts. This, however, did not satisfy Essex and the war-party; and the persistent plots of the English Jesuits in Spain and Flanders[1] added constant fuel to the flame, which Perez so artfully fanned from Essex House.[2]

An opportunity occurred late in 1593 by which some of the instruments of the Cecils might be discredited, and a fresh blow dealt at the policy of cautious moderation. Many of the Portuguese gentlemen who surrounded the pretender, Don Antonio, had for years sold themselves both to Philip and to England—and played false to both. It has been seen that Lord Burghley's network of secret intelligence, under the management of Phillips, was extremely extensive; and, amongst others, several of these Portuguese were employed.[3] The most popular physician in London at

[1] See the many confessions and declarations of spies and informers (1594) as to alleged plots for the murder of the Queen, Burghley, &c., at this time (State Papers, Domestic).

[2] It was here, and at Eton College, where he was lodged when the court was at Windsor, that he wrote his bitter "Relaciones" against Philip. He alleged that men were sent to London to assassinate him, and with indefatigable zeal of tongue and pen kept up and increased the ill-feeling in the court against Spain. His copious correspondence with Henry IV. leaves no doubt whatever either as to the real object of his mission or the utter baseness with which he executed it.

[3] See Burghley's correspondence with Andrada, Da Vega, and others (State Papers, Domestic), and Mendoza's references to the same men in the Spanish State Papers.

the time was Dr. Ruy Lopez, a Portuguese Jew, the Queen's physician, who was frequently employed by Burghley as an intermediary with the spies, in order to avert suspicion from them. On several occasions suggestions had been made to Philip by these spies of plans to kill the pretender, and Lopez's name had been mentioned to the Spanish Government as one who would be willing to undertake the task of poisoning him.

In 1590 one Andrada had been discovered in an act of treachery against Don Antonio, and arrested in England, and a letter of his to Mendoza had been intercepted, in which he said that he had won over Lopez to the cause of Spain. In another letter, not intercepted, he gave particulars of a proposal of Lopez to bring about peace between England and Spain, if a sum of money was paid to him. Through the influence of Lopez, however, Andrada was liberated, and sent abroad as a spy in the interests of England. Thenceforward for three years secret correspondence was known, by Lord Burghley, to be passing between Spanish agents in Flanders and Spain, and Dr. Lopez, through Andrada and others. The intermediaries were all double spies and scoundrels who would have stuck at nothing, and were so regarded by Lord Burghley; but Lopez was thought to be above suspicion, and to be acting solely in English interests. He had, however, made an enemy of Essex; and Perez artfully wheedled some admissions from him that he was in communication with Spanish agents about some great plan. In October 1593, Gama, one of the agents, was, at Essex's suggestion, arrested in Lopez's house and searched. The letters found upon him were enigmatical, but suspicious. Then another agent named Tinoco, with similar communications and bills of exchange in his pocket from Spanish ministers, was laid by the heels. Essex, prompted by Perez, was indefati-

gable in the examination of the men. They lied and prevaricated—for it is certain that they were paid by both sides; but one of them mentioned Dr. Lopez as being interested in some compromising papers found upon him, and suddenly on the 30th January the Queen's physician was arrested. He was immediately carried to Cecil House in the Strand, and there examined by the Lord Treasurer, Sir Robert Cecil, and Essex.[1]

His answers seemed satisfactory to the Cecils, whose agent Lopez was, but did not please Essex. The Earl, however, was forestalled by Robert Cecil, who posted off to Hampton Court and assured Elizabeth of the physician's innocence. Whilst he was assuring her that the only ground for the accusation — which had now assumed the form of a plot to murder the

[1] On the way from this examination Sir Robert Cecil and Essex rode together in a coach. The former—surely to annoy Essex—reverted to a subject which had caused intense acrimony between the Earl and the Cecils for months past, namely, the appointment to the vacant Attorney-Generalship which Essex was violently urging for Francis Bacon; an appointment to which neither the Queen nor Lord Burghley would consent, although the latter was willing for him to have the Solicitor-Generalship. The abuse and insult heaped upon the Cecils behind their backs on this account by the Earl, by the scoundrel Standen, and by the Bacons themselves, may be seen in the Bacon Papers (Birch). On this occasion the violent rashness and want of tact on the part of Essex is very clear. Cecil asked him, as if the subject was new, who he thought would be the best man for the Attorney-Generalship. The Earl was astonished, and replied that he knew very well, as he, Cecil, was the principal reason why Bacon had not already been appointed. Cecil then expressed his surprise that Essex should waste his influence in seeking the appointment of a raw youth. Essex flew in a rage, and told Cecil that *he* was younger than Francis, and yet he aspired to a much higher post than the Attorney-Generalship, *i.e.* the Secretaryship of State, and then, quite losing control of himself, swore that he *would* have the appointment for Francis, and would "spend all my power, might, authority, and amity, and with tooth and nail procure the same against whomsoever." The hot-headed Earl foolishly ended by an undisguised threat against Cecil and his father (Bacon Papers), which we may be sure the former, at least, did not forget, although Essex had quite changed his tone and wrote quite humbly to Cecil on the matter in the following May (Hatfield Papers). It is hardly necessary to say that Bacon was disappointed of the Attorney-Generalship.

Queen—arose from the Earl's hatred of Lopez, Essex was endeavouring to strengthen the proofs against the accused. When the Earl appeared at court the Queen burst out in a fury against him, called him a rash and temerarious youth to bring this ruinous accusation of high treason against her trusty servant from sheer malice, and told him that she knew Lopez was innocent, and her honour was at stake in seeing justice done. Gradually, however, the nets closed around the doctor. The Cecils did as much as they dared in his favour, but the presumptive evidence against him was too strong. The underlings competed with each other in the fulness of their confessions against Lopez, in hope of favour for themselves; and at length some sort of confession was said to have been wrung from Lopez himself,[1] Robert Cecil, with horror, was forced to admit his belief that he was guilty,[2] and Lopez and his fellow-criminals were executed at Tyburn early in June.[3] This, together with the simultaneous declaration of other Spanish Jesuit plots against the Queen, and the activity of Perez's venomous pen, aroused a feeling of perfect fury against Philip and his country.

All eyes looked to Drake and the sailors again to punish Spain upon the sea. Talk of great expeditions to America, to the Azores, to Spain itself, ran from mouth to mouth. What had been done with impunity

[1] See the extensive correspondence and proceedings in the case (State Papers, Domestic, and Hatfield Papers).

[2] Cecil to Windebanke (State Papers, Domestic).

[3] Great obscurity still surrounds the case. Apart from his own alleged confession, Lopez's condemnation depended upon the declarations of the double spies who were his accomplices, and he solemnly asserted his innocence on the scaffold. I have carefully examined all the evidence—much of it hitherto unknown—and although there is no space to enter into the matter here, I am personally convinced that the service that Lopez was to render was to poison Don Antonio—not the Queen—and bring about some sort of *modus vivendi* between England and Spain.

before, might, said the Englishmen, be done again, even though the King of France had become a Papist and was unworthy of English help. But the Queen was in one of her timid moods, and the Cecils held the reins tightly. Essex remained sulking or in disgrace for the greater part of the summer, and, we learn from a letter from Sir Thomas Cecil to his brother, only became ostensibly reconciled with the Lord Treasurer in August.

Little of the routine business passed through Lord Burghley's hands now, thanks to the activity of his son, but we get a glance occasionally at the aged minister from friends and foes who visited him. In the latter category we may place the spy Standen, a place-hunter and double traitor, who had fastened himself upon Essex, and yet was for ever pestering Burghley for an appointment. Sometimes the Lord Treasurer pretended to forget who he was, sometimes he gravely and politely expressed his regret at his inability to help him; but on one occasion, at least, he let him know that as he had joined Essex he must expect nothing from him. Standen was hanging about Hampton Court in the spring, and when the Queen had left, thinking the Lord Treasurer would be less busy than usual, "he stepped into his Lordship's bedchamber, and found him alone sitting by the fire." After some compliments, the place-hunter, for the hundredth time, set forth his claims. Burghley replied as before, that Standen was in England for a long time after his return from abroad without even coming to salute him. Standen said he had been ill with ague; "but," said the minister, "you have been about the court all the winter and must have had some good days. And," he asked, "how is it I have not seen the statement the Queen told you to draw up about Spain and to hand to me?" Standen hemmed

and ha'd, but at last had to confess that he had given the statement to Essex for the Queen six months before. "Then my Lord began to start in his chair, and to alter his voice and countenance from a kind of crossing and wayward manner which he hath, into a tune of choler,"[1] and told the spy that since he had begun with the Earl of Essex he had better go on with him, and hoped him well of it. Then angrily telling him some home-truths about his conduct, the Lord Treasurer dismissed the spy; though for the rest of the great minister's life he was not free from his importunities.

It was not often that Lord Burghley thus exhibited anger, even to a man like Standen. We seem to know the aged statesman better in the following pathetic little word-picture contained in a letter from his faithful secretary, Sir Michael Hicks, to Sir Robert Cecil[2] (27th September): "My Lord called me to him this evening, and willed me to write to you in mine own name, to signify to you that the Judge of the Admiralty came hither to him a little before supper time, to let him understand that he was not furnished with sufficient matter to meet the French Ambassador, and required five or six days' further respite . . . wherewith he (Burghley) was well contented . . . for at the time of his coming to him he found himself ill, and not fit to hear and deal in suits, and he doth so continue. And truly, methinks, he is nothing sprighted, but lying on his couch he museth or slumbereth. And being a little before supper at the fire, I offered him some letters and other papers, but he was soon weary of them, and told me he was unfit to hear suits. But I hope a good night's rest will make him better to-morrow."[3]

But though the great statesman was nearing his end,

[1] Bacon Papers, Birch. [2] *Ibid.*
[3] Hatfield Papers, part iv.

his mind was as keen as ever, and his influence was strong enough to prevent Essex from dragging England into an offensive war with Spain for the benefit of Henry IV. The Béarnais had still to cope with rebellion in various parts of his realm, and the Spaniards had secured a firm footing in Picardy and Brittany; his finances were in the utmost disorder, and against the advice of Sully he declared a national war against Philip in January. He had clamoured and cajoled in vain for more aid from Elizabeth, and in his pressing need had appealed with more success to the Hollanders.

This was the last straw. All the old distrust of the Burghley school against the French revived. The Queen was furious that these ingrate Dutchmen, whom she alone had rescued from the Spanish tyranny, should now curry favour with France. They owed her vast sums of money and eternal gratitude, they had offered her the sovereignty of their States, and yet instead of paying their debts and releasing some of her forces occupied in their service, they must needs seek fresh friends. If possible she was more indignant still with Henry; for, as we have seen, one of the two pivots upon which English policy turned was to exclude French influence in the Low Countries. Thomas Bodley was sent back to the States with reproaches for their ingratitude, and a peremptory demand that they should pay her what they owed her. Before he left England, however, he also was gained by Essex, and notwithstanding Burghley's and the Queen's strict instructions, was far more careful to provide excuses for the States than to press them.[1] Henry IV., too, never ceased to

[1] Correspondence with Burghley, in the Hatfield Papers, part v., and State Papers, Flanders (Record Office); and with Essex, in Bacon Papers (Birch). Burghley, apparently to occupy his mind during his illness, wrote a most elaborate minute, "to be shown to her Majesty when she is disposed to be

declare that unless much more English help was sent to him, the north of France would slip from his grasp whilst he was busy in the south; and in the autumn, point was given to his warning by the treacherous surrender of Cambray to the Spaniards. This was a direct danger to England, and Henry made the most of it by sending a special envoy to demand fresh English aid. But still Burghley was against violent measures, for a great Spanish fleet was being fitted out in Galicia, and Tyrone's rebellion in Ireland was being actively promoted by Philip. Defence, as usual, was the first thought of the Lord Treasurer; and disabled as he was, he drew up in the autumn a complete scheme for the protection of the country against invasion.[1]

But though Elizabeth would not commence offensive warfare against Spain, she was induced to listen at last to Drake's oft-rejected prayer for permission to raise a powerful privateer squadron to capture prizes and raid Panama. This was what people wanted. Drake's name had not lost its magic, and volunteers joined in thousands, eager for fighting and loot under the great admiral. The ports of Spain and Portugal were panic-stricken at the mere prospect of a visit, and if the fleet had sailed promptly in the spring, Philip might have been crippled again. But the Queen and Burghley were still apprehensive, and loath to let Drake sail too far away. Suddenly on 23rd July four Spanish pinnaces landed 600 soldiers on the Cornish coast, and without resistance they ravaged and burnt the country round Penzance.

merry, to see how I am occupied in logic and neglect physic;" proving that her demands upon the States to be made by Bodley are founded upon the maxims of civil law. "If," he says, "my hand and arm did not pain me as it doth in distempering my spirits, I would send longer argument" (Hatfield Papers, part v.). Thanks to Burghley's persistence, terms were made with the States.

[1] Printed in Strype's "Annals."

It was a mere predatory raid from the Brittany coast; but it seemed to justify all Elizabeth's fears, and, to Drake's despair, she forbade him to go direct to Panamá. He was, she said, to cruise about the Channel and Ireland for a month, then to intercept any fleet from Spain that might threaten, and finally to lay in wait for the Spanish treasure flotilla before he crossed the Atlantic. The orders doubtless originated from Howard, who was as cautious as Burghley himself; but Drake and his officers flatly refused to obey them. They had, they said, on the Queen's commission fitted out at vast expense a private fleet for a certain purpose, and it was utterly inappropriate to the service now demanded of it. The Queen was angry, and, as usual, called upon Burghley to refute the strategical arguments of the sailors, which he did in a learned minute. But it was never sent, for Drake was obviously in the right, and the Queen was obliged to give way. She made Drake pledge his honour to be back in England again in the following May to fight the new Armada, and, on the 28th August, Drake and Hawkins sailed out of Plymouth to failure and death.

All through the year, with but short intervals of comparative ease, Lord Burghley remained ill, but manfully determined to perform his duty. His letters to his son, written, of course, with greater freedom than to others, disclose more of his private feelings than we have been able to see at any earlier period of his career. Both in these letters and those of his secretaries the note touched is intense devotion to the public service at any cost to his own repose. Maynard writes to Sir Robert Cecil (23rd December 1594) that the sharp weather had increased the Lord Treasurer's pain. "But for your coming hither his Lordship says you shall not need, although you shall hear his amendment is grown backward." A few months later at

Theobalds, Clapham sends to Sir Robert very unfavourable news of the invalid, and in the following month of May we find him confined to his bed at Cecil House in London, suffering greatly, and fretting at his inability to go to court. In the autumn he tells his son that he is obliged to sign his letters with a stamp, "for want of a right hand"; but even then he concludes his letter thus—"And if by your speech with her Majesty she will not mislike to have so bold a person to lodge in her house, I will come as I am (in body not half a man, but in mind passable) to the muster of the rest of my good Lords, her Majesty's Councillors, my good friends. . . . Upon your answer I will make no unnecessary delay, by God's permission."[1] In the midst of his pain his letters are full of directions upon State matters. In a letter to Cecil in October, urging the Queen to send prompt reinforcements to Ireland, which apparently she was inclined to neglect, he says, "My aching pains so increase that I am all night sleepless, though not idle in mind."[2]

[1] The Queen at this time appears to have been desirous of saving Burghley trouble. When the court was at Nonsuch (September 1595), the Council was held in his room, the Queen being present. (Bacon Papers.)

[2] That he was not idle in mind even in his greatest pain is shown by the fact that during this autumn, whilst he was almost entirely disabled, he not only continued his close attendance to State affairs, but gave a great amount of attention to the new question which was disturbing the Church, and especially setting the University of Cambridge by the ears. A Mr. Barrett, of Gonville and Caius, had preached a sermon in which the doctrine of free grace was enunciated. This was thought by many to be "Popish," and Burghley, as Vice-Chancellor, ordered him to recant. The doctrine was eloquently defended by Burghley's protegé, Professor Baro. Curiously enough, Whitgift, a prelate of prelates, then came out with a series of articles (called the Lambeth articles) enforcing the extreme Calvinistic doctrine of absolute predestination. Burghley was passionately appealed to by both parties, and while supporting the authority of Whitgift, expressed his dissent from the doctrine of predestination. The Queen, annoyed at the question being raised, instructed Sir Robert Cecil to stop the dispute, which had caused much trouble both to her and Burghley.

That the Lord Treasurer's bodily weakness and overpowering political influence were recognised elsewhere than in England as a powerful factor in the international situation, is evident from the correspondence—amongst many others—of the Venetian Ambassador in France. Henry had gone north, and was besieging La Fère, in Picardy, in the late autumn, after the fall of Cambray, and had sent his agent Lomenie to England to support the efforts of Essex in his favour. But the Earl was in semi-disgrace, and the French agent went back with but small promises of aid. Henry was about to send a stronger envoy, Sancy, but Essex told him it would be useless, and the clever Béarnais, knowing best how to arouse Elizabeth's jealousy, despatched Sancy to Holland. Thereupon the Venetian Ambassador writes to the Doge: "If Sancy went to England just now he would not find the Queen well disposed towards the policy of his Majesty (Henry IV.), not only on the grounds I have so often explained, but also because she does not approve of the conduct of the French ministers. The chief reason, however, is that there reigns a division in the councils of the Queen, and her two principal ministers are secretly in disaccord. One of these ministers, the Lord Treasurer, is very ill-disposed towards the crown of France, and uses all his influence to prevent the Queen from taking an active part in this direction. There is a strong suspicion that he has been bought by Spanish gold. The other nobleman, a prime favourite with the Queen, is of the contrary opinion, urging that every effort should be made to quench the fire in one's neighbour's house to prevent one's own from being burnt. The Queen is in the greatest perplexity. The Lord Treasurer, in addition to his other arguments, urges the plea of economy, to which women are naturally more inclined than men.

All the same, no efforts are being spared to dispose her mind, so that should Sancy go to England he may easily obtain all he asks for."[1]

When it became evident that Henry was again appealing to the States, Elizabeth was forced to make a counter-move, and decided to send Sir Henry Unton to offer further English help, if certain French towns, especially Calais, were placed in her hands as security. It was clear that Henry neither could nor would agree to such terms, and probably the Queen and Burghley were quite aware of the fact; but upon Unton's embassy Essex founded a regular conspiracy for the purpose of outwitting the Cecils and dragging England into war. Antonio Perez had already been sent back to France in July 1595, self-pitying and lachrymose at leaving the luxury of Essex House to follow a camp; but to be received in France almost with royal consideration, and to be welcomed once more as the bosom friend of the King. He betrayed everybody; but his real mission was to send alarming news to Essex as to Henry's intentions, in order that Elizabeth might be frightened into an alliance with him to prevent his joining her enemies against her. Perez thought more of his own discomfort than of his English patron's policy, and had to be brought to book more than once. The Earl sent Sir Roger Williams to upbraid him for not making matters more lively. "I am doing," says the Earl, "what I can to push on war in England; but you! you! Antonio, what are you doing on that side?"

But when Unton went on his mission early in January 1596, a stronger ally than Perez was gained. He was entirely in Essex's interests, and received secret instructions from the Earl.[2] Perez and Unton were to work together, of course without the knowlege of Sir Thomas

[1] Venetian State Papers.

[2] *In extenso* in Bacon Papers (Birch).

Edmonds, the regular Ambassador, who was a "Cecil man." Henry IV. was to be prompted to feign anger and indignation with England, and threaten to make friends with Spain. "He must so use the matter as Unton may send us thundering letters, whereby he must drive us to propound and to offer." Perez, too, was to keep the game alive by assuring Essex that a treaty was on foot between France and Spain, and to reproach Essex for allowing Unton to be sent on such an errand as would mortally offend the King.

But the Cecils were too clever for Essex and Perez combined. One of Perez's secretaries played him false, for which he was afterwards imprisoned in the Clink by Essex; and it is probable that the threads of the intrigue, all through, were in the hands of Burghley. In any case, there was no great change in Elizabeth's policy,[1] and Unton himself died in France before his mission was complete (23rd March 1596). Only a few days afterwards news reached London that the Spaniards were marching on Calais. This, at all events, was calculated to

[1] Burghley did not prevail with the Queen at this juncture without trouble when Essex was near. In March 1596, Essex arrived at the court at Richmond, and Standen says: "The old man upon some pet would needs away against her will on Thursday last, saying that her business was ended, and he would for ten days go take physic. When she saw it booted not to stay him she said he was a froward old fool" (Bacon Papers). The following dignified letter written soon afterwards by Burghley to his son evidently refers to this incident: "My loving son, Sir Robert Cecil, knt., I do hold, and will always, this course in such matters as I differ in opinion from her Majesty. As long as I may be allowed to give advice I will not change my opinion by affirming the contrary, for that were to offend God, to whom I am sworn first; but as a servant I will obey her Majesty's command and no wise contrary the same; presuming that she being God's chief minister here, it shall be God's will to have her commandments obeyed—after that I have performed my duty as a Councillor, and shall in my heart wish her commandments to have such good success as she intendeth. You see I am a mixture of divinity and policy; preferring in policy her Majesty before all others on earth, and in divinity the King of Heaven above all." This letter seems to enshrine Burghley's lifelong rule of conduct as a minister.

arouse Elizabeth to action; and on Easter Sunday 1596 all the church doors in London were suddenly closed during service, and there and then a number of the men-worshippers pressed for service. They were hurriedly armed and on the same night marched to Dover for embarkation under Essex. No sooner were the men on board and ready to sail than a counter order came from London. Essex was frantic, and wrote rash and foolish letters to the Queen and the Lord Admiral. He writes to Sir Robert Cecil on the same day: "O! pray get the order altered. I have written to the Queen in a passion. Pray plead for me, that I may not be disgraced by any one else commanding the succour whilst I have done the work. Pray do not show the Queen my letter to the Admiral; it is too passionate."[1] Almost in sight of Essex, the day after this was written (14th), the citadel of Calais fell into the hands of the Spaniards, and Elizabeth found she had overreached herself.[2] When Unton had asked

[1] Hatfield Papers, part v.

[2] Lord Burghley must be absolved from all blame for the hesitation to succour Calais. The delay and failure were entirely the fault of the Queen. Whilst Burghley held back and resisted attempts to drag England into war with Spain unnecessarily; when English interests were really at stake, as in the case of Calais, he could be as active as any one. On the 6th April, as soon as the news arrived, his secretary wrote to Robert Cecil—the Lord Treasurer being "freshly pinned" with the gout and unable to write—approving of Essex's plan to relieve Calais; and on the 10th he writes himself, after the town had surrendered, but whilst the citadel held out: "I am heartily sorry to perceive her Majesty's resolution to stay this voyage, being so far forward as it is; and surely I am of opinion that the citadel being relieved the town will be regained, and if for want of her Majesty's succour it shall be lost, by judgment of the world the blame will be imputed to her. . . . These so many changes breed hard opinions of counsell." Sancy and the Duke de Bouillon came to Elizabeth at Greenwich to remonstrate with her, in Henry's name, on the effect which her demand for Calais in return for her aid had produced. Sancy had a long conversation with Burghley on the 23rd April, and the latter frankly told him that the conversion of Henry had entirely changed the situation. The only common interests now, he said, between the two countries was their vicinity. Sancy says the Lord Treasurer praised the Spaniards to the skies, to the detriment of the French. The French envoy

for Calais as the price of her help, the Béarnais had said, with his usual oath, that he would see it in the hands of the Spaniards first; and for once he had told the truth.

The blow to Elizabeth's policy was undoubtedly a severe one, and a counter-stroke had to be delivered. The old project which on several occasions had been submitted by Howard to the Council for an attack upon the shipping in Cadiz harbour, was revived. Essex was all aflame in the business from the first; but the Queen changed her mind from day to day. "The Queen," wrote Reynolds in May,[1] "is daily changing her humour about my Lord's voyage, and was yesterday almost resolute to stay it, using very hard words of my Lord's wilfulness." Lord Burghley appears to have been very ill at the time of the preparations;[2] but he was sufficiently well to secure the appointment of the aged Lord Admiral to the joint command of the fleet, to the discontent, and almost despair, of Essex; and to pen an order from the Queen strictly limiting the objects of the expedition to the destruction of the Spanish ships manifestly intended for the invasion of England. The great fleet of 96 sail, with a contingent of 24 sail of Hollanders, left Plymouth

was endeavouring to secure an offensive and defensive alliance with England, which Burghley steadily opposed. How could Henry help Elizabeth? the Treasurer asked; and what more could Elizabeth do for him than she was doing? In one of their interviews Burghley flatly told Sancy that the Queen did not intend to strengthen Henry in order that he might make an advantageous peace over her head. Sancy was shocked at such an imputation on his master's honour, and gave a written pledge of Henry that he would never treat without England, and this was embodied in the treaty (26th May 1596). Burghley made as good terms as he could, but he never was in favour of the treaty. His letter quoted above (page 479) and his quarrel with the Queen evidently had reference to this subject.

[1] Bacon Papers.

[2] Writing from Theobalds to Robert Cecil soon after the expedition sailed from Plymouth, he says, "I came here rather to satisfy my mind by change of place, and to be less pressed by suitors, than with any hope of ease or relief."

on the 5th June, and on the 20th appeared before the astounded eyes of the citizens of Cadiz. The divided command, and the small experience of actual fighting at sea of Howard and Essex, was nearly bringing about a disaster to the English; but at a critical moment Ralegh's advice was taken. The fleet sailed boldly into the harbour, and destroyed the shipping first, and then captured and sacked the city.

It was the greatest blow that had ever been dealt to the power of Spain; and it proved that Philip's system was rotten, and that the Spanish pretensions were incapable of being sustained by force of arms. When Essex came back he found that Sir Robert Cecil had been appointed Secretary of State (July) in his absence.[1] The Queen was fractious, and offended that her orders had been exceeded, and above all, that she had not received so much booty as she expected; and for a time Essex was kept at arm's length. But now that Cecil had obtained the coveted post of Secretary, he wisely endeavoured to make friends with Essex, who had so bitterly opposed him;[2] and, greatly to the Queen's delight, a new appearance of cordiality between them was the result. Sir Robert even brought Ralegh into the circle of grace. He had been for five years under

[1] Essex had lately, and most intemperately, been trying to force Bodley into the Secertaryship. His importunity was so great as to offend the Queen, and predisposed her against his protegés. How jealous Antony Bacon was may be seen in his letter. "*Elphas peperit;* so that now the old man may say, with the rich man in the gospel, '*requiescat anima mea.*'" Bacon Papers.

[2] That the reconciliation was not easy will be seen in Essex's letters in the Bacon Papers. The Earl writes in September to Lady Russell, "Yesterday the Lord Treasurer and Sir Robert Cecil did, before the Queen, contest with me, . . . and this day I was more braved by your little cousin (Cecil) than ever I was by any man in my life. But I was, and am, not angry, which is all the advantage I have of him." In the following April Essex entertained Cecil and Ralegh at dinner, "and a treaty of peace was confirmed." During the Earl's disgrace with the Queen shortly afterwards, Cecil appears to have behaved in a friendly manner towards him.

the Queen's frown, but Cadiz had made him friendly with Essex, and now Cecil and Essex together brought about a reconciliation with the Queen. On the 2nd June 1597 Ralegh once more knelt before his royal mistress, and donned his long-neglected silver armour as captain of the guard.

The sacking of Cadiz had irretrievably ruined Philip's prestige; but it had not deprived him of all material resources, heavy and ceaseless as had been the drain upon his treasury for the war in France. The Irish chiefs left him no peace from their importunities, and assured him again and again that with the aid of a few men the island might be his, and Elizabeth and the heretics at his mercy. Promises, sums of money, and slight succour were sent from time to time; but the insult of Cadiz and the exhortations of the Church, at length prevailed upon the King to attempt one great effort in Ireland to crush his enemy before swift approaching death struck him down. We understand now that such a system as his foredoomed to failure any attempt to organise promptly an efficient naval armament; for penury, peculation, delay, and ineptitude were the natural result of the minutest details being jealously retained in the hands of an overworked hermit hundreds of miles away from the centre of activity. But in England the news of his intentions caused far greater apprehension than we now know that they deserved; and Essex was again all eagerness to take out another fleet, and repeat elsewhere the *coup* of Cadiz.

This time he found no obstacles raised by the Cecils. In a biography of Lord Burghley, it is not necessary to probe the vexed question of the sincerity of Sir Robert Cecil's reconciliation with Essex. Most inquirers of late years have assumed, with some show of justification, that it was from the first a deep-laid plot of Cecil, perhaps

with Ralegh's co-operation, to ruin the Earl, as in its results it certainly did. But without admitting this, or at least implicating Burghley himself in such a plan,[1] it may fairly be assumed that when Cecil saw how smoothly things went for him, and how soon he obtained the Secretaryship when Essex was absent, he may have welcomed any opportunity of again getting rid of so turbulent and quarrelsome a colleague.[2] The earl's pride and jealousy had also taken from him much of the Queen's regard, and she was determined to humble or to break him. The first project had been to raise a small expedition under Ralegh and Lord Thomas Howard to intercept the Spanish treasure fleets; but when it became known that the Adelantado of Castile was making ready a fleet of 100 ships and a powerful army in the Galician ports, Essex proposed a great enlargement of the plan. He was authorised to raise a force of 120 ships, the Dutchmen were induced to send a strong contingent, and with infinite labour Essex and Ralegh induced the Queen to consent to their plan for burning the Spanish fleet, in port or wherever they could find it, and then to intercept and capture the homeward-bound flotillas from the East and West Indies.

Lord Burghley's attitude is seen by a cordial letter he wrote to Essex early in May (State Papers, Domestic). "I thank you," he says, "for not reproving my objec-

[1] It is curious that in the previous year, when Essex was going on the Cadiz expedition, Bellievre, the French minister, expressed an opinion that "his appointment is a suggestion of the Lord Treasurer, in order to divert the Queen from sending aid to his Majesty (Henry IV.), and to get rid of the Earl of Essex on the pretext of this honourable appointment, which would leave him (Burghley) master of the Council." It is fair to say that the Venetian ambassador who transmits this opinion, expresses his disbelief in it. Venetian State Papers.

[2] That the sagacious Bacon saw and foretold the consequences of Essex's willingness to absent himself in risky enterprises, is evident from his letters to the Earl in October 1596 (Bacon's Works, ed. Montagu, vol. 9).

tions for the resolutions for conference. I hope to see you at Court to-morrow, if God by over-great pains do not countermand me. *I like so well to attempt something against our Spanish enemy that I hope God will prosper the purpose.*"

The fleets gathered in Plymouth Sound early in July, and sailed in three fine squadrons under Essex, Thomas Howard, and Ralegh respectively.[1] On the day he sailed unsuspecting Essex in the fulness of his heart wrote a fervent letter of thanks to Cecil.[2] He would, he said, never forget his kindness whilst he lived; "and if I live to return, I will make you think your friendship well professed." Unfortunately he returned sooner than he expected, for the fleets were caught in a storm and driven back with much suffering and danger. Famine and sickness broke out, and for a whole month the fleets were wind-bound in the Channel, whilst the Queen began to waver about allowing her ships and men to be exposed again so late in the season. Once more the aged Lord Treasurer wrote to Essex on his return (July 23), "It is not right that I should condole with you for your late torment at sea, for I am sure that would but increase your sorrow, and be no relief to me. I am but as a monoculus, by reason of a flux falling into my left eye; and you see the impediment by my evil writing and short letter. . . . In the time of this disaster I did by common usage of my morning prayer on the 23rd of every month, in the 107th Psalm, read these nine verses proper for you to repeat, and especially six of them, which I send to you. This letter savours more of divinity. As for humanity, I

[1] There were about 120 ships, English and Dutch, and a force of some 6000 men, including 1000 English veterans from the Low Countries, led by the gallant Sir Francis Vere.

[2] State Papers, Domestic.

refer you to the joint-letter from the Lord Admiral, myself, and my son."[1]

Essex and Ralegh posted to London early in August and prayed the Queen to let them resume their voyage. "Only," said Essex, "allow me to take half the ships and to do as I please where I like, and I will perform a worthy service. But the Queen would not hear of such a thing, nor should they with her permission enter any Spanish port at all. At last, as a compromise, she consented to Ralegh's sending a few fire-ships into Ferrol, on condition that Essex was to keep quite away from the enterprise; and to be sure she should be obeyed, she insisted upon the soldiers being left at home. At length, on the 17th August, the truncated expedition again sailed. Disaster, jealousy and division dogged it from the first. Another great storm drove the squadrons asunder. The winds prevented them from approaching Ferrol. Ralegh, under a misunderstanding, attacked Fayal, in the Azores, in the absence of Essex, and the sycophants around the Earl bred evil blood between them. The main body of the flotillas from the Indies escaped them; and eventually Essex, with his ships battered and disabled, crept into Plymouth at the end of October, bringing with them hardly sufficient plunder to pay their expenses. Fortunately in their absence the Spanish fleet for the invasion of Ireland had also been driven back and practically destroyed by a storm, and all present danger from that quarter had disappeared.

Essex found that in his absence the Lord Admiral had been made Earl of Nottingham, which, in conjunction with his office, gave him precedence, and that Secretary Cecil had been made Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. The Earl was furious, and sulked at Wanstead instead of going to court; but the old Lord Treasurer

[1] State Papers, Domestic.

was once more amiability itself—as well he might be, for his son was winning all along the line. On the 9th November he wrote to the Earl, "My writing manifests my sickness. Some of your friends say that the cause of your absence is sickness, so I send my servant to ascertain your health. I wish I could remedy any other cause of your absence; but writing will do no good. It requires another manner of remedy, in which you may command my service."[1] And again, ten days later, "I hoped you would have come to court for the fortieth anniversary of her Majesty's coronation. I hear, to my sorrow, that you have been really sick, but hope you will soon be back at court, where you shall find a harvest of business, needful for many heads, wits, and hands."[2]

Although the young Earl obstinately absented himself from court, he seems to have sent a letter of thanks and friendship to Lord Burghley; for the latter on the 30th November writes expressing his joy at the Earl's contentment, but chiding him for his continued absence, which he says is exposing him to "diversity of censures." "I find," he says, "her Majesty sharp to such as advise her to that which it were meet for her to do, and for you to receive. My good Lord, overcome her with yielding without disparagement of your honour, and plead your own cause with your presence; whereto I will be as serviceable as any friend you have, to my power—which is not to run, for lack of good feet, nor to fight, for lack of good hands, but ready with my heart to command my tongue to do you due honour."[3] At length, probably at the suggestion of Burghley, the angry Queen made Essex Earl-Marshal, which gave him precedence over Howard, and he came back to court sulky and quarrelsome, galled that cooler heads and keener wits than his could work their will in spite of him.

[1] State Papers, Domestic. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.*

In the meanwhile the war between France and Spain was wearing itself out. Since the conversion of Henry IV. matters were gradually working back into their natural groove of nationalities instead of faiths. Philip was bankrupt in purse, broken in spirit, and already on the brink of the grave; but the awful sacrifices his ruined country had made had at least prevented France from becoming a Protestant country. He was leaving Flanders to his beloved daughter Isabel, and wished to bequeath to her peace as well. By Henry's treaty with England and the United Provinces two years before he had bound himself to make common cause with them against the King of Spain; but the main cause of his own quarrel with Spain had nearly disappeared, for the Leaguers were now mostly on his side, and for a year past the Pope (Clement VIII.) had been busy trying to bring about a reconciliation between the two great Catholic powers. The pontiff assured Henry that he was not bound to keep faith with heretics, and might break the treaty with Elizabeth and Holland. "I have," replied the Béarnais, "pledged my faith to the Queen of England and the United Provinces. How could I treat to their detriment, or even fail in a single point, without betraying my duty, my honour, and my own interests? No pretext would excuse such baseness and perfidy, and if it could, sooner than avail myself of it I would lose my life."

But when, in the autumn of 1597, the Spaniards were finally routed at Amiens, it was evident that Spain could fight no longer, and that the moment for peace had come. The Archduke, who was to marry the new sovereign of Flanders, was especially anxious for peace before the Spanish King died, and at his instance advances to Henry were made. This was the last great international question in which Burghley was personally interested, and by a curious coincidence it brought once

more to the front the traditional English policy, of which he was the representative; a policy which had for many years past been broken and interrupted by the religious position on the Continent. The growing power and ambition of the Dutch United Provinces, and their aid sent to Henry IV. against Spain, together with Henry's conversion to Catholicism, had once more aroused the fear of England that by an arrangement between them the French might dominate Spanish Flanders. The project of making the Infanta and her husband practically independent sovereigns of the Belgic provinces was therefore eminently favourable to English interests, and drew England once more irresistibly to the side of Spain, as against the Dutchmen and Henry IV.; for the possession of Flanders by the French (or now even by the strong pushing young Republic under French influence) was one of the two eventualities against which for centuries the traditional policy of England had been directed. Coincident, therefore, with Henry's negotiations, secret approaches were made by England to the Archduke, and once more, after a half-century of fighting, England was smiling as of old on a "Duke of Burgundy," as against a French King.[1]

In November Henry sent envoys to the States and to England to demand further aid, but with the alternative of a peace conference. The Dutchmen thought they had been betrayed, and indignantly said so; refusing absolutely to make peace with ruined, defeated Spain, except on their own terms, and in their own time. Elizabeth had far greater reason than they for indignation with her ally, and had to be approached more gently and with greater diplomacy. De Maisse, Henry's envoy, arrived in Lon-

[1] De Maisse, the French peace envoy to England, wrote, "These people are still dwelling on their imagination of the house of Burgundy, . . . but it does not please them to have so powerful a neighbour as the King of Spain."

don on the 2nd, and was received by the Queen on the 8th December. He found the Cecils absolute masters of the Council; for all of Burghley's predictions of the falsity of Frenchmen had come true, and his objection to the treaty of alliance (May 1596) had been more than justified. Essex, only just returned to court from his sulky fit at Wanstead, took in earnest Henry's demands for reinforcements against Spain, and was all for fighting again, whilst Burghley of course understood them to be only a mask for the peace suggestion. The Queen and Burghley were determined to assume indignation and grievance in order that, in the coming peace, they might get the best possible terms for England; indignant, however, as they might pretend to be, there was nothing they desired more than a pacification that should open all ports to English trade and leave Flanders in the hands of a modest, moderate sovereign under the guarantee of Spain. But withal it behoved them to walk warily, for Spain had outwitted them in the peace negotiations of 1588, and Protestant Holland could not be abandoned.

On the 8th December De Maisse was received in State by Elizabeth at Whitehall,[1] whither Lord Burghley was brought in a litter, but Essex was still absent. The Queen was enigmatical but polite, and referred the envoy to Lord Burghley, with whom he conferred on the 10th, when it became evident that the object of the English was to gain time whilst other negotiations were proceeding. The Queen exerted all her wiles and ancient coquetry on De Maisse to delay matters, and not without success; whilst she inflamed Caron, the envoy of the Dutch States, with hints of Henry's desertion and perfidy, in order to embitter French relations with them.

[1] Full particulars of his embassy will be found in his Journal, in the Archives de la Ministère des affaires étrangères, Paris, partly reproduced in Prevost Paradol's "Elizabeth et Henry IV."

At length Henry IV. got tired of this buckler play, and De Maisse plainly told Elizabeth that the King considered that her delay in giving him a definite answer released him from his pledges under the treaty of alliance. Again he was referred to Burghley, whom he saw again early in January. The Queen could not treat with the Archduke, said the Treasurer. If her envoys were to attend a peace conference, it could only be with the representatives of the King of Spain; besides, he said, the Queen must settle with States before she entered into any negotiations at all. It was well known to Henry and his minister at this time that brisk secret negotiations were being conducted between Elizabeth and the Archduke; and in a final interview with Burghley on 10th January, De Maisse gave him an ultimatum. His master must make peace or be supported in war. Essex was present at the interview; and although the Lord Treasurer invited him to speak he remained obstinately silent, except to say that he did not see how religious dissensions would allow of peace being made with Spain.

At length Burghley announced that the Queen would send an embassy to France to settle with Henry the whole question of peace or war, in conjunction with an embassy from the States. The embassy consisted of Sir Robert Cecil, Sir Thomas Wilkes, and Dr. Herbert; and the instructions taken by them are contained in the last of the important State papers written by the failing hand of the great statesman. The document is a long and sagacious one, laying down as an absolute condition of any peace with Spain that the United Provinces should be secured from all fear of future attempts to subdue them. An earnest desire for peace breathes all through the document, but it must be a real peace, which acknowledged accomplished facts,

abandoned inflated claims, and recognised the rights of Protestantism to equal treatment.

Cecil and his companions embarked from Dover on the 17th February, and on the death of Wilkes in Rouen, the whole burden of the embassy fell upon the Secretary. It was not until they reached Angers on the 21st that Cecil saw the King. In effect the Béarnais had already made peace secretly with the Archduke; the States were determined that they would give up no tittle of their hard-won independence, and haughtily refused even a truce if their rights were not recognised. England dared not abandon them, so that Cecil on his interview with Henry could only reproach him for his desertion of the ally to whom he owed so much. Henry replied that his position was such that he could not do otherwise. "I am," he said, "like a man clothed in velvet that hath no meat to put in his mouth."[1]

On the 28th March Cecil received a letter from his father dated the 1st, which caused him deep alarm. "The bearer," it said, "will report to you my great weakness. But do not take any conceit thereby to hinder your service; but I must send you a message delivered to me in writing by Mr. Windebanke. I make no comment, not knowing out of what shop the text is come, but in my opinion *non sunt ponendi rumores ante salutem.* God bless you in earth and me in heaven, the place of my present pilgrimage."[2] Cecil unwillingly followed Henry to Nantes on his hollow errand; but this letter disturbed him, and at the earliest moment he took leave of France and returned, although on the way somewhat better news reached him. "Mr. Secretary returned the 1st of the month" (May), says

[1] For Cecil's account of his embassy see Bacon Papers, Birch. There are also a great number of papers and letters on the subject of the mission in Cotton Vesp., cviii., and B.M. MSS. Add. 25,416.

[2] State Papers, Domestic.

Chamberlain, "somewhat crazed with his posting journey, the report of his father's dangerous state gave him wings; but for aught I can learn the old man's case is not so desperate but he may hold out another year well enough."[1]

Before Cecil had left on his mission, greatly against his inclination, he had received a promise from Essex that during his absence he would not cause any alteration to be made either in policy or court affairs. The Earl had been as good as his word, and for a few days after Cecil's return they were friendly; but when the Peace of Vervins was actually signed between Henry and Philip the old feud between the policies of peace and war broke out again. This was one of those junctures when France and Spain being friendly, it had always been the Burghley policy to draw closer to the latter power, whilst at the same time fortifying those who were opposing her; and this was the course adopted by the Cecils on the present occasion. Francis Vere was sent to Holland with promises and encouragement for the States to stand firm; whilst the Archduke in Flanders was secretly informed that the Queen desired peace, and would enter into negotiations if she were assured that her desires were reciprocated. This policy soon alienated Essex and the war-party, and after one stormy interview on the subject with the dying Lord Treasurer, the latter handed to the Earl a book of Psalms and silently pointed with his finger to the line, "Bloodthirsty men shall not live out half their days;" a last prophecy which the Earl's pride and folly hastened to fulfil.[2]

[1] Chamberlain Letters, Camden Society.

[2] The Venetian Ambassador in France writes at this time (24th July): "The States are sending three representatives to England to urge the Queen to continue the war, as in her councils there are not wanting those who recommend this course, chiefly the Earl of Essex; but the Lord Treasurer is opposed, and, more important still, the Queen herself is inclined to peace."

All the summer the aged minister lingered sick unto death in his palace in the Strand, sometimes taking the air in a coach or litter, and on two occasions going as far as Theobalds. During the time his great yearning was to bring about a peace before he died between his mistress and the old enemy, who, in the bitterness of defeat, was dying too in the frowning mountains of the Guadarrama far away. For forty years these two men had striven as none ever strove before to maintain peace between England and Spain; and their efforts had been unavailing, for religious differences had for a time obliterated national lines of policy. But Burghley had had the supreme wisdom of bending before superior force and adapting his varying means to his unvarying objects. England thus had gained, whilst Philip, buoyed up with the fatuous belief in his divine power and inspiration, scorning to give way to considerations of expediency, had been ruined by war and had failed in most of his aims. And yet through the welter of wrong and slaughter, Providence had decreed that the objects that both men aimed at should not be utterly defeated. The alliance between the countries was needed both by Spain and England in order that Flanders should not fall into the hands of the French, and this at least had been attained. By England it was required to counterbalance a possible French domination of Scotland, and this had ceased to be a danger. On the side of Philip had been gained the point that France was still a Catholic country; whilst to England it was to be credited that Protestantism was now a great force which demanded equality with the older form of belief, and, above all, that England was no longer in the leading strings of France or Spain, but had, in the forty years of dexterous balance under Elizabeth and Burghley, attained full maturity and independence, with the consciousness of coming imperial greatness.

To say that this was all owing to the management of the Queen and her minister would be untrue. Circumstances and the faults and shortcomings of their rivals—nay, their own shortcomings and weaknesses as well—aided them powerfully to attain the brilliant success that attended them; but it may safely be asserted that without a man of Burghley's peculiar gifts at her side Elizabeth would at an early period of her reign have lost the nice balance upon which her safety alone depended.

It was curious that the last hours of Burghley should have been occupied in striving still to bring about peace with Spain, which had been his object through life, though he had attained for England already most of the political advantages which a peace with Spain might bring; but old prejudices against France were still as strong as they had been in his youth, for, as he had truly foretold, the Béarnais had played them false, and thenceforward no Frenchman should ever be trusted again. Spain, in any case, would keep the false Frenchmen out of Flanders; so Spain was England's friend.

For twelve days the Lord Treasurer lay in his bed at Cecil House before he died, suffering but slightly, and resigned, almost eager for his coming release. On the evening of the 3rd August he fell into convulsions, and when the fit had passed, "Now," quoth he, "the Lord be praised, the time is come;" and calling his children, he blessed them and took his leave, commanding them "to love and fear God, and love one another."[1] Then he prayed for the Queen, handed his will to his steward Bellot, turned his face to the wall, and died in the early hours of the next morning; decorous, self-controlled, and dignified to the last.

His death, though long expected, was a blow which the aged Queen felt for the rest of her life. She wept,

[1] *Desiderata Curiosa.*

and withdrew herself from all company, we are told, when she was informed of her loss;[1] and two years afterwards Robert Sidney, writing to Sir John Harrington, says, "I do see the Queen often; she doth wax weak since last troubles, and Burghley's death doth often draw tears from her goodly cheeks."

Even Essex, who had wrought so much against him, felt the loss the country had sustained. At the splendid funeral in Westminster Abbey[2] on the 29th August, we are told by an eye-witness that "my Lord of Essex to my judgment did more than ceremoniously show sorrow";[3] and Chamberlain, writing on the next day, says, "The Lord Treasurer's funeral was performed yesterday with all the rites that belonged to so great a personage. The number of mourners were above 500, whereof there were many noblemen, and among the rest the Earl of Essex, who (whether it were upon consideration of the present occasion or for his own disfavours), methought, carried the heaviest countenance of the company."[4]

Throughout Europe the death of the Lord Treasurer was looked upon as a loss to the cause of peace. Essex, it was thought, would now hold sway and launch England upon a policy of warlike adventure. But Essex was himself hurrying to his doom; and Robert Cecil held firmly in his hand the strings of his great father's

[1] A superficial observer, Dudley Carlton, writes a few days after Burghley's death: "There is so much business to be thought of on the Lord Treasurer's death. The Queen was so prepared for it by the small hopes of recovery that she takes it not over heavily, and gives ears to her suitors. The great places are in a manner passed before his death." (State Papers, Dom.)

[2] The full arrangements for the funeral will be found in the State Papers, Domestic, of the 29th August (Record Office). After the funeral at Westminster, the body was carried with great state to Stamford and buried at St. Martin's Church, in accordance with the will. Dr. Nares appears to be in doubt as to whether the interment was at Westminster or Stamford, but the State Papers seem to admit of no question on the point.

[3] Lytton to Carlton (State Papers, Domestic).

[4] Chamberlain Letters.

policy—a policy which was on the death of the Queen to bring a Scottish king to the English throne, and unite England and Spain again in a friendly alliance. The baseness and trickery that accompanied the reunion of the countries belong to the history of the reign of James, and formed no part of the plan of Lord Burghley or his mistress. There was no truckling in their relations with foreign nations, however powerful they might be, and the servile meanness of the Stuarts in carrying out Lord Burghley's traditions must be ascribed to their degeneracy rather than to the policy itself.

Of Lord Burghley's place amongst great statesmen it may be sufficient to say that his gifts and qualities were exactly what were needed by the circumstances of his times. He was called upon to rule in a time of radical change, when vehement partisans on one side and the other were fiercely struggling for the mastery of their opinions. It is precisely in such times as these that the moderate, tactful, cautious man must in the end be called upon to decide between the extremes, and to prevent catastrophe by steering a middle course. This throughout his life was the function of William Cecil. His gifts were not of the highest, for he was not a constructive statesman or a pioneer of great causes. He often stood by and saw injustice done by extreme men on one or the other side rather than lose his influence by appearing to favour the opposite extreme; and, as we have seen in his own words, he was quite ready to carry out as a minister a policy of which as a Councillor he had expressed his disapproval. This may not have been high-minded statesmanship, but at least it enabled him to keep his hand upon the helm, and sooner or later to bring the ship of State back to his course again. He was a man whose objects and ideals were much higher than his methods, because the

[illegible] changes, whereas the former were based upon broad truths and great principles, which are eternal. But it may safely be asserted that the rectitude of his mind and his great sense of personal dignity would prevent him from adopting any course for which warrant could not be found, either in the law of the land or what he would regard as overpowering national expediency. The first cause he served was that of the State; the second was William Cecil and his house. Through a long life of ceaseless toil and rigid self-control these were the mainsprings of his activity and devotion. If he was austere in a frivolous court, if bribes failed to buy him in an age of universal corruption, if he was cool and judicious amidst general vehemence, it was because the qualities of his mind and his strict self-schooling enabled him to understand that his country might thus be most effectively served, and that it would be unworthy of William Cecil to act otherwise. The gifts which made him a great minister at a period when moderation was the highest statesmanship, would have made him a great judge at any period, and it is in its judicial aspect that the finest qualities of his mind are discovered. It was to the keen casuist who weighed to a scruple every element of a question and saw it on every side; it was to the calm, imperturbable judge, that from the first hour of her reign Elizabeth looked to save her against herself; and whatever may be said of Cecil's statesmanship in its personal aspect, it had the supreme merit of having kept the great Queen upon the straight path up which she led England from weakness, distraction, and dependence, to unity and strength.

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